THE TITLES OF JEHOVAH

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·Rev·Preb·Webb·Peploe,M·A·

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THE TITLES OF JEHOVAH

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A Course of Sermons

PREACHED BY

THE REV. H. W. WEBB-PEPLOE, M.A.

VICAR OF ST. PAUL'S, ONSLOW SQUARE, AND
PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

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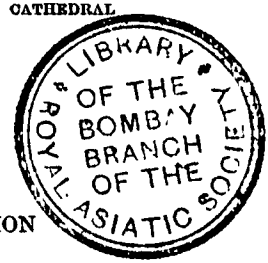

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PREFACE

To present for the general acceptance or criticism of the public, sermons which were delivered without manuscript or note, and which have only been preserved by the kind efforts of a friend, is an act which clearly demands some apology from the Preacher.

Between minister and people there must of course, after twenty-five years of fellowship, exist a sympathy which not only permits, but almost demands, a familiarity of speech that to the ordinary reader may appear misplaced or unjustifiable. In reply to such a criticism, the Preacher of these discourses can only say that, at the time of their delivery, he had no thought of publication; and that it is simply at the urgent request of many who heard them, that he has consented to their appearance in printed form. To do justice to the public, they should have been rewritten entirely; but that would have destroyed their interest for the original hearers. The

friend's notes have therefore been only so far revised as seemed to be really needful, before presenting them to the public. The faults are the Preacher's: may the grace be the Readers'.

The subject here treated deserves far fuller attention than it seems yet to have received, either from preachers or writers; and the importance of it can only be gauged by those who have studied the expositions of writers who hold that the earlier Books of Holy Scriptures are compounded of fragments from different documents, which they distinguish by such titles as "Jehovistic," and "Elohistic."

To confirm, even in some slight degree, the faith and confidence of those who believe in the absolute unity of Scripture, and in the Mosaic authority of the Pentateuch, was the humble desire and purpose of the Preacher. This he hoped to do—not by elaborate arguments or criticisms; but by reverent consideration of the perfections of the Godhead, which could only be conveyed to man's mind and heart, by the double Name "Jehovah Elohim" (which first appears when God would open out His gracious purposes for man—in Genesis ii.), and by the several Titles, or descriptions, attached to the name of "Jehovah." Of these gracious revelations of the Divine character and purposes, only nine have

been touched upon in this series of Addresses. There are others which deserve close attention, and which should be learned from Hebrew scholars, as they do not appear in the text or the margin of our Bibles.

The highest hopes of the Preacher will be fulfilled if he may learn hereafter, that he has helped even a few of his brethren and sisters to a better knowledge of "Jehovah" their God. "For this" (said the Lord Jesus) "is Life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent."

H. W. WEBB-PEPLOE.

25 Onslow Gardens, S.W., London,
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THE TITLES OF JEHOVAH

I

"JEHOVAH ELOHIM: THE LORD OUR GOD"

"And they that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee: for Thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee."—PSALM ix. 10.

I HAVE chosen this as a motto text (though I might have taken hundreds of others), because "Thou, LORD" is the great fundamental thought upon which, in this course of sermons, our whole attention is to be fixed; and in the verse now before us it is very strikingly exhibited.

"This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent" (St. John xvii. 3). Now these words do not simply apply to the source of eternal life, or to the means by which the gift of God is made available for men; but, while including these, the words seem clearly to convey to us the thought, that, all through eternity, "eternal life" will consist of learning to "know God and Jesus Christ, Whom He has sent." If, then, eter-

nity is to be spent in acquiring the knowledge of the One True God, it is perfectly clear that the subject is infinite; and how can it be possible that while upon earth man should apprehend the infinite God? We bow before the declaration of St. Paul, and acknowledge that "great is the mystery of godliness"; but while we acknowledge that there is mystery in all that is Divine, we must recognise that our Lord Himself has incited us to the attempt to "know," and therefore apprehend, "the only true God"; so that it is no token of humility, but a mark of indifference or unbelief, to lay the subject aside and to say, "It is beyond my grasp, I will not attempt to fathom it." Yet, notwithstanding that it is beyond our grasp, and will be even throughout eternity, we may well "press towards the mark"—not, as St. Paul says in Philippians iii. 12, "as if we had already attained, or were already perfect," but because it is our high calling to *seek* to know that glorious God Who "passeth knowledge," "that we may be filled with all the fulness" of that wonderful Being. (See Ephes. iii. 19.)

And surely the one and only subject of all true preaching, true study, and true worship is, that man should learn to know more and more of the One True God?

I suppose if sin had not entered the world, the acquisition of the knowledge of God would have been the high occupation of man for ever and ever; but seeing that sin has been introduced into our nature, we are still more limited than our first parents were in regard to this wonderful subject, and all that we can do is to give ourselves humbly to the study of it; and it is with this conviction that I propose to undertake the careful, though necessarily imperfect, consideration of some of the Names by which the Almighty has been pleased to reveal Himself to man, in conjunction with the awe-inspiring Title of "Jehovah."

It is indeed a wonderful subject, and many will say, "Surely there can be no use in attempting to fathom it." Pardon me if I reply that there are few Christians who know anything about the Person of God as revealed in His Names, though God has specially "revealed them unto us by His Spirit," in order that we might know the deep things of God "which the Spirit searcheth out." It was the one great charge of the Prophet Hosea against Israel, that God's "people were destroyed for lack of knowledge" (ch. iv. 6); that they did not know the Most High, though He had given them the opportunity; and that this led them to set up false gods or idols, and thus brought God's

judgment upon themselves and their children. And, notwithstanding the possession of far greater privileges than Israel's, there is now in these days but little knowledge of the One True God. This is strange when we remember that, from the earliest days of man's history, the one great desire of the human mind seems to have been the attainment of knowledge; and surely the knowledge of God (the only "Infinite") must be the highest and the most attractive. This knowledge, by which man should be like God, was the bait which drew Eve to Satan: "Ye shall be as gods" (as "Elohim," Gen. iii. 5), said the tempter, "knowing good, and evil." And this idea has been ever most captivating to man. The question is, why do not men attain to this knowledge of God? and the answer is—that they put the wrong cup to their lips for the slaking of their thirst. The natural man has ever gone to the wrong fountain to drink; and, instead of real knowledge, he has simply for the most part poisoned his own soul.

Where then, it may be asked, shall true knowledge be found? The answer is, Let us listen to God and not to Satan. And so, while there are many ways in which we may study God, I have thought that one of the most profitable would be the consideration of the Names by

which He has revealed Himself in His true character to man. The first Title that I have selected is "Jehovah Elohim"; a remarkable combination presented to us by God the Holy Ghost, with the specific purpose of teaching man to know the true God, as He could not be known by any other means. There are many other combinations; but we commence with this one because it is the first instance of the name "Jehovah" occurring in the Scripture (Gen. ii. 4). Both of these Names are in themselves remarkable manifestations of the Deity, far beyond our feeble grasp; but God, Who intended man gradually to know Him, has revealed His characteristics and workings in many different ways, and by many different expressions of His Being and Glory. Why? Because no sinful man can look upon the face of God and live; and, even when Jesus Christ appeared in human flesh as "Emmanuel, God with us," the knowledge of God came not to the great majority of men. Only a few could say that they knew Him as "the only begotten of the Father," and only one, St. John, could say, "We beheld His glory," in the deepest sense of the word.

Great indeed is the mystery of the Godhead as revealed to us under the different titles of "Jehovah." It takes many rays to make up

pure light; and when we seek to understand the Majesty of the LORD our God, it takes many descriptions to give any true conception of His glory. Of course we cannot receive the whole Revelation at once; but though we can only see one part at a time, that alone is sufficient to give perfect enjoyment; and this would seem to be the special purpose for which the Great High God, Who is One, has yet revealed Himself to man under many different Titles.

We must of course take up these Titles separately; and I may confess at the outset to being staggered at the vastness of our subject and the hopelessness of doing any real justice to it. I have taken the Title of "Jehovah" for the chief thought of our course, because of what I believe to be its distinctive force when compared with other Names by which the Godhead is revealed. In "Jehovah" we shall find the fountain-head of all spiritual blessings for man, as distinguished from God's operations in nature.

And in order to approach at all to the meaning of this revelation, we must ask what is meant by the Name "Jehovah"? There is no word in the human language more absolutely indescribable. It may be familiar to many, that when God revealed this Name to His people

Israel, and gave to certain men the privilege of transcribing the Scriptures, they became terrified with the idea that God would chastise, if not destroy, any one who lightly made use of, or abused, this wonderful Name. Five times at least it was said to Israel, through Moses, that they should not profane the Name of their God; and the reason given is, "For I am the LORD"—that is, "Jehovah"; and in Leviticus xxiv. 16 it is specially said twice: "He that blasphemeth the Name of the LORD shall surely be put to death." Every Jew, therefore, became so much alarmed at the danger connected with the pronouncing, or writing, of this wonderful Name, that he dared not give expression to it, for fear that the stroke of God might come upon him for uttering, and possibly blaspheming, the incomprehensible or, what might be called, *THE* Name of his God. The consequence was that after a certain time, there was no knowledge of the way in which "Jehovah" should be pronounced; and when the Scribes were writing out the Scriptures, and came to the Name of "Jehovah," the Awful One, they would lay down their pens, in most cases, and would not write it as originally given, but would write the less awful Name of "Adonai" ("My Ruler"). That being so,

wherever the word "Jehovah" occurred, we have the substitution of "Adonai," except when "Adonai" is joined to it in the original, when they used to write "Adonai Elohim." This accounts for the fact that in large numbers of cases we find the word LORD printed with capitals, while in others it is printed "Lord" as the proper rendering of "Adonai." The Greeks rendered it by "Kurios"; the Vulgate by "Dominus"; and the English by "LORD," but with this distinction, that for "Jehovah," "LORD" is always in capitals, but "Lord" in small letters should (in the Old Testament) be thought of as "Adonai." Take one case: Psalm cx. 1, "The LORD said unto my Lord"; where "Jehovah" speaks to "Adonai." That is how the words are properly applied to Christ. Again, if we consider such passages as Genesis xv. 2, where Abraham says, "Lord GOD," we find that in the original it is "Adonai Jehovah"; but as "Adonai" comes first, the transcribers could not put the same word twice, so they put "Elohim" for "Jehovah." It is also very rarely that we find the word "GOD" in capital letters, and then it is only the translation of "Jehovah," because "Adonai" comes before it; while "God" is the word for "El" or "Elohim." Hence it is that in these days we have no knowledge

of the pronunciation of "Jehovah" as originally given to Moses by God. In Psalm lxviii. 4 we find the word "Jah" (that is, "Jehovah" shortened), for even here, though compelled to mention the Name, the transcribers dare not write it in full. When we inquire as to the derivation and meaning of "Jehovah," it seems almost certain that the word is derived from "Havah," "to be"; and every time we read the word "Jehovah," or "LORD" in capitals, we should think of the one and only Being Who is absolutely self-existent, or possessed of essential Life in Himself."

Therefore, when God came to Moses at the bush and wished to give him a special revelation of Himself, under the glorious name "Jehovah," it is clear that this Name was not known rightly by Israel (see Exod. iii. 13, and vi. 3), though it had been revealed to man from the very commencement of his history. Moses said: "When I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, the God of your fathers hath sent me unto you, and they shall say unto me, what is His Name? what shall I say unto them?" The answer was: "I am that I am," *i.e.* "Jehovah, that is Jehovah, hath sent thee unto them." That may perhaps be given as the full force of the expression.

So whenever we read the word "Jehovah" we ought, if possible, to pause and think of One Who represents in Himself—absolute self-existence and unchangeableness. Therefore this one word really conveys to our minds the truest idea of the Godhead that can be conceived. It seems necessary, moreover, to call attention to the fact that there is this difference between the Name "Jehovah" and the other Titles which are frequently given to God (and this is especially true with regard to the word "Elohim"), that "Jehovah" seems always to be used in connection with beings who can apprehend and appreciate the Infinite; while other Titles express the general ideas of greatness and glory. The consequence is that this Name is not put forward till there is given the account of man's special creation, and God's peculiar relation to him, as distinct from the lower creation. In Genesis i. and ch. ii. 1–3, we find the word God, or Elohim, thirty-five times: "God spake," "God said," &c. But the moment that we read of God resting from His work, and having done with creation in its original sense, then for the first time we come upon the words "LORD God" (that is, "Jehovah Elohim"), because it is as the LORD, or Jehovah, that God gives blessing upon the earth for the good of man, who was to have

dominion over all as the representative of his Maker. The two Names together are used twenty times in chapters ii. and iii., though "Elohim" alone is used by Satan and by Eve (iii. 1–3). "Yea, hath God said?" is the subtle taunt of the tempter, because Satan dared not mention "Jehovah": and the woman answered, "God hath said," because her thoughts go back to the original God as the Creator of the universe; and while her heart has once begun to turn towards evil, she cannot touch, nor understand, the Majesty of that Title "Jehovah." Is it still asked by any one—"Wherefore this distinction?" Because (as I believe) whenever that wonderful Name of "Jehovah" is mentioned, we find that in it is represented the high moral attributes of God, which could be displayed only to rational, and not to irrational, creatures. In "Elohim," He is the majestic Ruler, and under that Title comes out the idea of omnipotence, or creative and governing power, but in the title of "Jehovah," throughout the length and breadth of Scripture, is shown forth God in His essential, moral, and spiritual attributes. (These things are deeply interesting, but so difficult of expression that the preacher cannot convey to others one-hundredth part of what he seems to see in his subject.) The

Creator called man into existence as the one being on earth who should have capacity for the enjoyment of God: and the attributes which appear in the Name "Jehovah," and which were not wanted for the creation of the material world, were only made visible when man came forth from God's hand. What are they? The essential attributes of God's nature as a Spirit, namely, Righteousness, Holiness, Love, &c.; and this is the Life which man was meant to enjoy in all its beauty, power, and spirituality (remembering the deep inner meaning of that word "spiritual"). (See 1 Cor. ii. 9–14.)

Think, then, how the Name "Jehovah" brings before us the everlasting self-existence of Righteousness; and how God created man to enjoy and to exhibit His Righteousness. But suppose that man fall from this Righteousness, there will then necessarily appear the attribute of Holiness by which the guilty is condemned; but, by the next attribute of God—viz., Love—He will, as Jehovah, seek to bring man back to the enjoyment of Himself. Therefore wherever the Name "Jehovah" appears, after man has fallen from original righteousness, what see we—but that God is ever seeking the restoration of man? In Genesis iv., where through Abel's offering we are taught how guilty sinners may approach God through the

sacrifice of another's life, we read, in the last verse of that chapter where Adam names his son Enos—which means "weak fallen man"—that "Then began men to call upon the Name of the 'LORD' (or Jehovah)." Why? Because weak fallen man will always discover at last that he requires more than the Omnipotent Rulership of "Elohim." He needs the Holiness and Love of the great covenant GOD, with Whom he was meant to have the relation of companionship, and whom Jehovah intends to bring back to Himself. But how? His Holiness has been abused by man; yet Love shall bring him back if man will accept it. And so, for 4000 years, wherever God is revealed as working for the redemption of mankind, He deigns to speak of Himself as "Jehovah." When He sends Moses to deliver Israel, it is as "The LORD" that He speaks. In Exodus vi. 6, 7, 8, He thrice says, "I am the LORD." In verse 6, "I am the LORD, I will bring you out;" verse 7, "I will be to you a God, and ye shall know that I am the LORD;" and in verse 8, "I will give it you for an heritage: I am the LORD." What does this mean but that, as "Jehovah" the great covenant-keeping "I AM," God meant to redeem His people Israel. He says I am determined that they shall be Mine, and that they shall have the blessing of

knowing The LORD, as the only true God. Then again there is that text (perhaps one of the most frequently repeated in the Bible), where the LORD says: "I will say, It is My people, and they shall say, The LORD is my God" (Zech. xiii. 9, and others). Fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen times (according to the division made of the words) do we find this marvellous expression repeated in the Scriptures, to show that the poor unworthy children of Israel, though they have fallen from the knowledge of Jehovah once given to their Fathers, shall yet return and say, "The LORD, yea! even Jehovah is my God," and while other people may talk of "gods many" (or of "Elohim"), and "lords many" (or of "Adonai"), God's true people shall say, "Jehovah, The LORD, is for ever my GOD."

Once more, this Name "Jehovah" is always present when a covenant is made by God with man: and as God's covenants are always "Beeriths," that is, unconditional oaths, this Name expresses the absolute power and will of the great "I am," which makes GOD wholly the Giver, and man simply the receiver. This is why we always find the "LORD" (Jehovah) mentioned as the God of Israel, because of His redemption given to, and His covenant made with, them. For examples

of this all-pervading truth see Psalm cxvi., where we find "Jehovah" mentioned no less than sixteen times, while "Elohim" occurs only once (in ver. 5) where "Jehovah" is described as "our God Who is merciful." In Psalm cxvii., which consists of only two verses, "Jehovah" is mentioned no less than three times, and in Psalm cxviii. no less than twenty-eight times, while "Elohim" occurs only three times (in verses 27 and 28), and this is the reason there given for its occurrence—"God is the LORD (Jehovah) Which hath shewed us light." "Thou art my God (Elohim) and I will praise Thee; Thou art my God, I will exalt Thee." Once take this key, wherewith the Holy Ghost has provided us, and never again should we read any of those marvellous Titles which God has deigned to appropriate to Himself without attempting to apprehend the special meaning and force of the word.

Nor does the solemn symbolism of Names and Titles disappear when we pass from the Old Testament to the New. For no sooner do we open the first page of the New Testament than we read in St. Matthew i. 21: "Thou shalt call His Name Jesus," that is, "Jah," "Hoshea," "Jehovah, my Saviour"; and thus Jesus of Nazareth comes to

us as "Jehovah." Again two verses later we read: "His Name shall be called Emmanuel, God (Elohim) with us;" and thus both "Jehovah" and "Elohim" are revealed in Christ Jesus.

What a wonderful power there is then in Names, especially in Names given by, and to, God, and exhibiting their real power in the Person of His Son. Is it any wonder that in Philippians ii. 9 we read: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every Name: that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD (Jehovah), to the glory of God the Father." This is the purpose of God, that the real meaning of "Jehovah" should be manifested and appreciated in the Person of Jesus Christ. But we have only been able to touch, as yet, the mere fringe of this mighty truth.

Turn now, however, again for one moment to the expression "Elohim," and see how the combination "Jehovah Elohim," brings out our redemption, and thus brings us to Jesus Christ. "Elohim," as I have said, exhibits the idea of God engaged in the works of creation and government. There is some dispute among the learned

as to the derivation of the word. Some say that it comes from "El," meaning "our strength, our might"; while others say that it is derived from "Alah," to "swear" or "declare." In either case it expresses the idea of omnipotence in God, and implies a power that can do whatsoever it will. God has but to speak and the thing will be done. Thus it brings out the idea of absolute authority in the Creator and Ruler of the universe; but the strange thing is that the word is plural, and thus expresses the plurality, or Trinity, of the Godhead. Let me here quote the words of St. Augustine: "If you want to predicate Love for your God, there must be a Trinity, for there must be One who loves, One who is loved, and the Spirit of love between them." So if we dwell rightly on the Creatorship of God, we shall at once discover the doctrine of the Trinity. Assuming then that "Elohim" (the Godhead) is distinguished from "Jehovah" (the spiritual "I AM"), because it brings out rather the idea of majesty, power, and glory, than of Righteousness, Holiness, and Love —we can well understand how "Elohim," as the Creator, expresses the fiat of Almighty God which called things into existence "by the Word" (St. John i. 1–3), while the Spirit brooded over all (Gen. i.) till creation was complete.

The combination of the two names "Jehovah Elohim" gives us the thought of the majestic, omnipotent God, the Three in One, deigning to call into existence one creature called man, who, while made in the image and likeness of "Elohim," should also possess moral and spiritual power to apprehend "Jehovah." Sin caused the loss of this power, but Jesus Christ has been revealed to restore it, and it is by the Word and Spirit of this wonderful God that man, who is by nature "dead in trespasses and sins," is now called to receive everlasting life, and then to enjoy the full knowledge of "Jehovah," by being united to Him for ever "in righteousness and true holiness."

I trust that we have now been incited to think a little more deeply of the wondrous word GOD, and to appreciate somewhat the force of the expression, "The LORD GOD" (Jehovah Elohim)—that we have been lifted up from the mere thought of Him as an Autocrat, *i.e.* Creator and Ruler, and have been led to think of Him as the covenant-keeping, loving, and ever-gracious "I AM." Woe to him who rejects the blessings now offered to us all by "Jehovah Elohim" in Christ Jesus the LORD (Phil. ii. 11), and by the Holy Spirit, Who is Himself also The LORD (2 Cor. iii. 17). And

henceforth may all be able to say: "Blessed be the Name of the LORD, from this time forth for evermore;" "for they that know Thy Name will put their trust in Thee; for Thou, LORD, hast not forsaken them that seek Thee."

II

"JEHOVAH JIREH: THE LORD WILL PROVIDE"

"And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place JEHOVAH JIREH, as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen."—GENESIS xxii. 13, 14.

IN offering for consideration the well-known words, "JEHOVAH JIREH: The LORD will provide," need I say that we have before us an expression of wondrous fulness and meaning; and that we are about to speak of what I suppose every soul would be yearning for, if in any real degree we understood what the LORD will provide, or has provided. This is a very different subject from that of last week; and I may here say that to explain the several Titles of Jehovah is exceedingly difficult, not only because of the limits imposed upon sermons, but because of the vastness of each branch, or division, of our subject. The fact is that these Titles are more suited for meditation than for verbal explanation; therefore, whatever the preacher can offer for consideration must be

taken as but a very poor and partial exposition of the whole. Nevertheless, it is necessary to dwell with the utmost possible care upon these different Titles of Jehovah, if we would, in any degree, appreciate the glory and goodness of Him "with Whom we have to do."

Now, to know God we must "know Jesus Christ, Whom He has sent" (for in and through Him alone can God be approached by the creature), and He is expressly declared to be "LORD (*i.e.* JEHOVAH), to the glory of God the Father," as St. Paul says to the Philippians. Hence the first "necessity laid upon us," or the first calling of wisdom, will be to consider well and earnestly the revelations of "Jehovah" bestowed upon us in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ—how, or for what purposes, He displayed Himself as "The LORD." For then, and then only, shall we even in the smallest degree appreciate the majesty and beauty of the great Jehovah, "I AM."

We have already dwelt briefly on the words "Jehovah Elohim," but we shall, in thought at least, recur again and again to these Titles; for we should never forget, while expanding the Name "Jehovah," that we are dealing with the same God who has revealed Himself also as "Elohim," and that "Elohim" expresses the essential attri-

butes of Omnipotence and Justice, by which God acts as the Ruler of the universe. We shall do well, then, to remember that while "the LORD is the true God, He is the living God and an everlasting King: at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His judgment" (Jer. x. 10); yet let us always think with delight that under the Title of "Jehovah" God graciously appeals to the moral and spiritual senses of a creature, who is capable in some degree, however small, of apprehending His glory; and that under this Name we see in Him the perfection of Holiness and Love, as well as the magnificent attribute of eternal self-existence. And these attributes being revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ when He appeared among men as "Jehovah Elohim" (St. Matt. i. 21–23), we saw that, notwithstanding the utter ruin of man through sin, it was in the purpose of God, under the name of "Jehovah," to exhibit His own capability of restoring to the creature the power and privilege of "glorifying God and enjoying Him for ever." We saw how man was originally called into existence through the operation of God as "Elohim," and that thus the omnipotent Creator necessarily became His Ruler and His Judge. But He was also known as "Jehovah"

in the garden of Eden; and, the moment that man fell, God, as "Jehovah," became revealed in His perfect character of Holiness and Love. God, in His Holiness, longing for others to enjoy it, necessarily expresses to us the real character of Love. Holiness demands absolute moral and spiritual perfection, and Love gives out in order, if possible, to make man partaker of that which the Eternal possesses. Hence, not only because man was created an intelligent creature was it necessary that the Jehovahship of God should be revealed, but the moment that he fell and sin had entered his being, it was essential for his salvation that the Divine attribute of Love should be discerned. Hence the promise concerning the seed of the Woman, and all the dispensations of Type, Sacrifice, and Prophecy. But, for want of discernment or appreciation by man, for 4000 years God was never done justice to; and until Jesus Christ came, it seemed as if "Jehovah" could never be rightly understood. But when Christ Jesus appeared and taught men by character, by conduct, by life, and by death, that "God is Love," and that He "so loved that He gave His only-begotten Son" for the sake of the world, at last the real character of God seemed to open out before the sons of Adam wherever

there was a true announcement of "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." All through eternity we shall be engaged in the study of "Jehovah,' and, as distinguished from "Elohim," this Name presents to us, even here, "the unsearchable riches" of Divine goodness and love; yet we should never forget that the God of Creation, "Elohim," must necessarily govern us as our Ruler and be the Judge of all whom He has endowed with reason and spiritual privileges. Consequently, when sin entered, and man sank from that high position in which he was intended to enjoy God for ever, there must be provision made for his restoration to the life of fellowship with God, or else he must inevitably perish for ever. And here it is that we are led to see the meaning and beauty of the expression "JEHOVAH JIREH." In the margin it is rendered, "The LORD will see or provide." Now, in common speech, these two words—"see and provide"—are quite distinct in their meaning, the one from the other; but the moment we come to deal with God the two words are found to be one and the same; and for this reason, that whatever "Jehovah" sees, He must have foreseen from all eternity; and while as "Elohim" God foresees, with all the prerogatives and powers of omnipotence and

eternal wisdom, as "Jehovah" He foresees also with holiness and love; and so there must be not only *pre*vision but *pro*vision, and the word "see" becomes practically one with "provide," when we remember that "provide" is merely a compound of two Latin words meaning to "see beforehand." From the Latin Dictionary we learn concerning "*pro*vide" and "*pre*vision," that one is the verb and the other the noun of "seeing beforehand." When, therefore, we apply these expressions to "Jehovah Elohim," who is not only Infinite in wisdom and power, but also in love, we see that one must necessarily imply the other, and that the Son of God will certainly provide for the need which He foresees will exist. God's *pre*vision then means *pro*vision, for as He foresees and is perfect in character, He must provide for, or supply, the want, whatever it be; and this is what is expressed by "JEHOVAH JIREH." The difference between God and man must be clear to us all. Man may foresee an event, and yet be incapable of making any provision at all for the need; whereas God who foresees will, because He foresees, most surely make provision for, or supply, the need, however great or severe.

Thus in the simple word "see," or "provide," as applied to "Jehovah" in our text, we have not

only the fact that God will certainly foresee, but that He will also inevitably provide for every possible case that can arise in man's history. But this is not all! We shall know much more of Jehovah if we listen attentively to the words ever afterwards applied to the place of Abraham's sacrifice, "*In the mount of the* LORD it shall be seen," or, as in the margin of the Revised Version, "*He* shall be seen."

And here may I pause to express my conviction that in passages such as these, every word and letter should be considered as of priceless importance or value; and that on no account should we think it mere quibbling, but take it as the duty or privilege of all who would enter into the beauty of Scripture, to see that every single word has some deep significance, and that the more closely we study the very letters of Divine Revelation, the more we shall value and appreciate the true character of "Jehovah." In one case, then, we read in the Authorised Version, "In the mount of the LORD *It* shall be seen," and in the Revised Version (margin), "*He* shall be seen." In the other, "In the mount of the LORD *It* shall be provided," or (R.V.) "He shall be provided." But even these alternative readings will hardly convey the full force of the passage,

until we bring into connection with it the words of verse 2: "Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of *Moriah*." But what is the meaning of the word "Moriah"? Strange to say, this is again in the Hebrew a kindred word to "Jireh," taken from "Jehovah seeing," and it may be translated "seen of Jah," or "the vision of Jehovah." Such, then, being the meaning of the word "Moriah," we see at once a far deeper and more solemn application for the words of our text, viz., that, "In the mount of the LORD, or in Moriah (*i.e.* where Jehovah shall see) It, or He (Jehovah), shall be seen." Immediately our thoughts are turned to inquire for One, Who in the infinite power and love of Jehovah shall be seen upon Mount Moriah making provision, by substitutionary sacrifice, for all the demands of Almighty God ("Elohim," v. 1).

"The LORD (Jehovah) shall provide," and "In the mount of the LORD (Jehovah) Jehovah shall be seen." What beautiful words! For, while we carefully observe the distinction between the Revelations of God as "Elohim," and as "Jehovah," we shall better be able to appreciate the character of this wonderful vision if we ask for what it was that Jehovah was here promising to provide. We shall not rightly answer this question unless we

observe the striking contrast between the uses of "Elohim" and "Jehovah" in this passage. From verse 1 to 9 we read only of "God" or "Elohim." He comes to tempt, or try, Abraham as the God of power, the God of government, the God of justice, and the God of judgment. Now mark the action of these principles, which necessarily work as between the Creator and His intelligent creature Man. God calls upon Abraham to take his only son and offer him up as a sacrifice to his Maker and Ruler; but at once Love appears and says, Let it be to Mount Moriah, *i.e.* to the place where "Jehovah," as distinguished from "Elohim," will be seen, and there offer him up for a burnt-offering. "And Abraham took the wood and laid it upon Isaac his son, and he took the fire in his hand and a knife: and they went both of them together." All this is under the orders of "Elohim." But when we come to verse 11, we find that the interposition made to save Abraham from slaying his son is attributed to the angel of the LORD (*i.e.* "Jehovah"); and except once in the twelfth verse, where the angel is speaking to Abraham of his fearing God (for it was his duty to fear the Mighty God who was his Ruler and his Judge), it would seem throughout that as "Elohim" God demanded the sacrifice, while as

"Jehovah" He made complete provision for the salvation of the doomed one. I trust these distinctions do not appear to any one as trifling with the Word of God. The contemplation of them has filled my own soul with joy, and I must impart it, however feebly; with the consciousness that the attempt to convey by words the distinctions that open out between the different Titles of Jehovah must, of necessity, appear to many as utterly hopeless. That as "Elohim" God demands, and as "Jehovah" He supplies, is, I am confident, one of the most important helps to the understanding of God's Word; and if we could always remember this when reading our Bibles, there would never again be any question about different manuscripts or authorities, about "Elohistic" or "Jehovistic" authors of this or that passage, but all would appear what it truly is—a consistent, Divinely given, Record of truth.

But what was it that God, as "Jehovah," foresaw and provided for when He bade Abraham "take Isaac and get him into the land of Moriah"? We have several things brought before us in this glorious picture as expressing the real force of "Jehovah Jireh." First, shall we say that "Jehovah" foresaw, and then would provide for, the fact, that man, though called to know and

enjoy God "according to the Spirit of holiness," would fail to carry out the gracious purposes of God; that he would lose his touch with God, and bring himself under judgment by sin; and, being under judgment, would have the sentence of death laid against him. Isaac is exhibited to us as the pattern or example of one who is under the judgment of God for sin, and who, having incurred the universal penalty of sin, must therefore be "taken" and put to death before God. It is as "Elohim" that God requires the life of Isaac. Being accounted "guilty before God," he needs must die; for this is the universal sentence of the Ruler against all who "have sinned and come short of His glory." But here it is that we read "Jehovah Jireh," "the LORD will provide;" and when Holiness and Righteousness, combined with Love, have provided a substitute for the condemned, even the voice of Justice can say: "Lay not thine hand upon the lad." "I will provide—I have provided—one that shall take the place of the lost:" and thus the forfeited life is redeemed and restored. Then, as Abraham looked round about him with amazement, and with the knife actually uplifted to slay his son, he saw a ram caught in the thicket, placed there by "Jehovah," as the substitute for one who was under the penalty of

death on account of sin. How beautiful should now appear the combination of Holiness and Love which could lead Abraham for that awful sacrifice to Mount Moriah, the place "where Jehovah shall be seen." We shall perhaps understand this better when we have considered what is elsewhere brought before us in the Scriptures concerning Mount Moriah. In 2 Chronicles iii. 1, we read, "Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father in the place that David had prepared in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite." What a marvellous picture now opens out from the words of our text, by which we learn that God's appearance to Abraham and Isaac as "Jehovah" —the LORD Who will provide, and in that very mountain of Moriah—is to be considered as the forecast or illustration of all that should afterwards be carried out in regard to substitution, in and through the Temple of the LORD. Abraham is called to slay Isaac for the satisfaction of God's justice; yet the angel of the LORD stays his hand, and there is no slaying of the condemned. Why? Because, as we read, "Jehovah shall be seen;" and mercy is enabled to rejoice against judgment. Again, long ages afterwards, we find in 2 Samuel

xxiv., that when God's anger was stirred against Israel, and He had begun to destroy them, the LORD stayed the hand of justice: and where? Is it a mere coincidence that it was again in Mount Moriah, and that thus the people of Israel —the descendants of Isaac—were delivered from the penalty of death in the very same spot where their father Isaac had been delivered by "Jehovah," the LORD of mercy and of love?

Again we read in 2 Chronicles vii. how "Jehovah" appeared in the temple which Solomon had erected upon Mount Moriah, and how He promised that that temple should be the centre not only of His Justice and Holiness, but also of His Grace, His Mercy, and His Peace for evermore: why? Because of David's love? Partly, perhaps, but far more certainly because in that mountain it was to be seen how the LORD would provide for perishing sinners.

Again, if we look to the prophecies of Zechariah, we have a wonderful vision of the glory of the LORD as seen in that temple on Mount Moriah, which was to be rebuilt after the captivity of Babylon: and this, remember, was in the very spot where Abraham and David had seen the Justice and the Mercy of the LORD.

It was here, too, that Isaiah was permitted to see, in vision, that glory of the LORD, before which

the seraphim veiled their faces, crying, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts." And yet, out of that glory in the Temple on Mount Moriah, was heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" to make sinners understand the awful Holiness, *and* the gracious Goodness of Jehovah (vers. 5, 13).

And once again let our thoughts be carried forward to that day when Jesus Christ the Son of God appeared in the second temple on Mount Moriah, and when He cleansed it (as narrated in St. John ii.) of all that openly interfered with the holy worship of His Father. By this, and by the repetition of this action some three years later, He showed how, in the Temple, there must be "Holiness to the LORD"; and yet immediately afterwards, on leaving that Temple, He cried, with the tenderness of a love that no waters could quench, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and ye would not:" thus pleading with the guilty to accept and appreciate the loving kindness and tender mercy of Jehovah, as "provided" and "seen" in the Holy Temple of the LORD.

And yet once again let us direct our thoughts to the solemn scene exhibited in the second chapter of the Acts, where in immediate connection with that Temple on Mount Moriah, where the multitudes would be gathered to keep the feast, the Holy Ghost was outpoured upon mankind, that He might fill them with blessings; and while manifesting the Holiness of the LORD God Almighty and insisting that His Temple must always be holy, might show them how Jehovah had, on Mount Moriah, provided a spiritual Substitute for that material temple which men had made desolate by their sin. This new Temple, as He revealed to them, was to be found in man—with Jesus, Emmanuel (*i.e.* Jehovah Elohim), for the headstone thereof. For of Him it was foretold, that He should build the Temple of the LORD (Zech. vi. 12, 13), and yet Himself be the Head or chief corner-stone thereof. And this new (third and last) Temple is to be made "an habitation of God (Elohim) through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 21, 22).

Such are a few of the thoughts presented to our minds when we have followed out even most cursorily the line of teaching which pervades every part of God's Word, and which takes its rise from that scene where God made

Himself known as "Jehovah Jireh" on Mount Moriah. But again, as we seek to realise the idea of Abraham offering up his son Isaac, we find that the LORD has provided us with a very beautiful picture in the Father's consecration of His only Son to carry out the purposes of God Almighty. For, as all must see, we have a forecast, or figure, in the person of Abraham, of what "Jehovah" was prepared to do for man; and in the Father of the Faithful we seem to see represented One greater than Abraham, even "Jehovah" Himself, Who was going to give His only Son Jesus Christ that He might become the Saviour of mankind by substitution; and by His death on Mount Moriah, as "the Lamb of God," might "take away the sin of the world." And to Jehovah Himself we may say with amazement, "Thou hast not withheld Thy Son, Thine only Son." "He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His Life a ransom for many." "In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen."

But once again, as I look on Isaac in his wonderful self-consecration, willingly submitting to his father's will even unto death, I cannot but think of that still more wonderful consecration by which the Son of God would submit to *His* Father's will, and thus redeem the whole human race to

God by His blood. "In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen," even "in that mount of the LORD" when Jesus stood and said: "Oh! My Father, not My will, but Thine be done:" or in that mount where the cross was raised and where "Jehovah Jireh" was so marvellously fulfilled, that with His dying breath the Son of God could exclaim, "It is finished. Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit."

And yet once more, if we are Abraham's children we should take our stand with Father Abraham on "Mount Moriah," or "the mount of the LORD," and there learn the solemn practical lesson, that there will have to be a going up to that mount for each one of us, *i.e.* that there will have to be a consecration of all at God's demand, and that the LORD will provide the grace and the power according to our need, for what is required to be a life-offering, or the sacrifice of our life (St. John xii. 25); and if we have understood in any sense the deep meaning of "Jehovah Jireh," it teaches us not only that the LORD has provided a complete salvation from the curse and the penalty of death which had fallen upon our race; but that exactly as Abraham, and afterwards Jesus, ascended that hill with this one thought in the heart, God's will must and shall be done,

believing that, even if life should be forfeit, there would be provided a resurrection from the dead, which would far more than compensate for the sacrifice made—so you and I are called to go up Mount Moriah, not knowing perhaps what it means, except that it is the will of God our Father. The fire, the wood, and the knife, must be ready to take; and as we go we must ever be saying those words: "Not my will, O my Father" —"The LORD will provide." And assuredly if we are willing to learn the lesson of obedience by the things which we suffer, and by submission to God's will (see vers. 1-8), "The LORD will provide" (ver. 14) the grace, the comfort, the power, aye, and even the resurrection, and with that resurrection He will provide for the faithful (Rev. ii. 10) a place in His own eternal glory.

I beseech you, therefore, draw not back from the holy privilege of sacrificing all to the will of "Elohim," that you may be ready to dwell hereafter, for ever, with "Jehovah" in that bliss which has been promised, and is even now being "provided" for those who "follow the Lamb, whithersoever He goeth."

III

"JEHOVAH ROPHI: THE LORD MY HEALER"

"For I am the Lord that healeth thee."—EXODUS xv. 26.

"JEHOVAH ROPHI." Such is the special attribute, or description, of the great high God, to which I would now proceed to call your attention. It is one that is not so commonly alluded to as others, because the Title is not given in Hebrew in our Bibles, either in the text or in the margin. Yet this Title may, I think, be described as *the* one which pre-eminently strikes home to the hearts of men, because of its appropriateness to their need; every man is conscious of a want of healing, and every man rejoices to hear of a healer. It is only once used in the Scriptures concerning man (viz., Isaiah iii. 7), and even there it is hardly used in a good sense, or as if carrying power. "I will not be a healer." It lies with God to be this; and as we all require healing in our bodily, moral, and spiritual nature, it is perhaps the one point in which all would agree to rejoice, if they might experience the truth of Jehovah's words: "I am the Lord that healeth thee."

Now I would ask you to remember that we are invited to prove God: "Prove Me now," He says by His servant Malachi. But if we propose to prove Jehovah upon the particular subject of our text, we must observe that He also will prove us. See the verse preceding my text: "He made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there He proved them." And it is generally understood by the most learned commentators, that we are not to think of this ordinance and statute, or of this proving, as lying in the words that Jehovah pronounced, but in the processes which He had already carried out with regard to His people Israel. The words mean that Jehovah had been proving their faith and their submission, or the reality of their belief in the God Who had delivered them; and that by this proving they were to learn that a statute and ordinance were being put upon them. And remember that whatsoever was true of Israel in the body, is true for us in the spiritual domain. We may not claim what Israel was to enjoy in the body, because they were God's chosen people under a temporal dispensation; but we may claim all that was offered to them in a spiritual manner. Are we not told by the Apostle St. Paul, "Now these things were our examples" (1 Cor. x. 6); and again, "Now

all these things happened unto them for ensamples" (v. 11)?

Hence, if we would rightly appreciate the fact that the Lord was the Healer of Israel, and that He was proving them and conveying to them thereby a statute and an ordinance which should affect their whole future life, we must consider the circumstances under which the revelation of this attribute was made known to the Israelites; and then we will consider the application to ourselves. We of course remember that to the Israelites the name of "Jehovah Elohim" had been known theoretically for many years—and how the name of "Jehovah Jireh" had been most remarkably fulfilled in their immediately preceding history. For when the whole nation had realised that they were under the penalty of death, they were suddenly and in a miraculous way delivered by the Lord's own hand, and having experienced by the Exodus the joy of salvation from the judgment of God and the bondage of Egypt, the children of Israel might be supposed to have left all their troubles behind them. Freed by the Passover Lamb from death; and freed by the passage through the Red Sea from their bondage and burdens, surely the redeemed of the LORD were now free to go forward and enjoy their life

of liberty in every possible sense of the word. But no sooner were they delivered from the bondage of Egypt than new needs and new difficulties arose on every hand. They could sing that song of gratitude and rejoicing which is given in the first part of this fifteenth chapter of Exodus—"Then sang Moses and the children of Israel," we are told, "this song unto the Lord," &c., and the song is one of grateful thanks to God for the deliverance that He had wrought on their behalf. They were a free people when once they had crossed the Red Sea, and in that sea the Egyptian army had been drowned; who could wonder, then, if the Israelites "shewed themselves joyful before the LORD"?

And doubtless all who read these words have, at least, in some degree apprehended the deep spiritual solemnities of "Jehovah Elohim" and the spiritual significance of "Jehovah Jireh." We can hardly be ignoring the glorious fact that the LORD has provided for all of us that "Lamb of God, Which taketh away the sin of the world"; and that by taking away that sin He has provided a way of deliverance for us all from the judgment of God, from the penalty of sin, and from the consequences of all our corruption and depravity.

Now, by most of us claim is made to the liberty thus provided. We affirm ourselves a people set free from our task-masters, and it is our right to claim that freedom, if spiritually and by faith we have passed through the Red Sea—that is, the death and burial of the Lord Jesus Christ. But then, like Israel, we have reached the eastern side of the sea, that is, the Resurrection life which is provided for us in Christ, and well may we sing the triumph song of the Israelites: "I will sing unto the LORD, for He hath triumphed gloriously." "The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is His name."

But even while the song of deliverance was in their mouths, the Israelites would become conscious of a new and terrible need. How could they hope to satisfy their natural thirst? The Red Sea lay close beside them, but there was nothing there but salt water; it was as the place of death that they had passed through that sea; and as they went forward and came to Marah, they thought—whither shall we turn for the supply of our wants? There is no life without water, and what shall we drink?

They had hastened forward to Marah in the hope that they would find water sufficient to meet the need of two millions of people, but all that they came upon was, waters so bitter, that in their agony the cry of murmuring went up against Moses, and

they said, "What shall we drink?" There seemed to be no provision for them in this new need of their wilderness journey, and they stood face to face, as they thought, with a new and terrible form of death. Death had seemed to threaten them when they faced the Red Sea; but they had passed safely through that, and truly marvellous had been their escape from its perils. Death had seemed to be upon them when their foes followed them into the sea; and yet the LORD had delivered them. But now the demands of nature were heavy upon them, and there appeared no possible means of meeting these demands. They stood, therefore, face to face with an agonising death, more terrible perhaps than any that they had met with, and been delivered from, before.

Then it was that the LORD gave to Moses, as their Leader and Intercessor—who cried to Him to have mercy upon them, and to provide for their need—the knowledge of a certain tree, which was to be cast into the waters; and the waters were immediately turned from bitterness to sweetness, from deadly to life-giving properties, so that the people could drink and gain refreshment and strength, and go forward with the conviction that the LORD had again delivered them from death: and the sounds that were heard throughout the

camp would be those of rejoicing in place of murmuring; and as the LORD'S voice said—"Jehovah Rophi"—the people would answer: "It is the LORD that healeth." And then behold the immediate result. They came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and they encamped there by the waters (ver. 27). Full supply—pleasant shade and joyful rest in the very midst of the wilderness.

Now, before we seek the application of this history, which is not perhaps evident to all, I would ask you once again to think how exactly our position tallies with that of the children of Israel. I need not do more than remind you that we are supposed to have ascended Mount Moriah with our Father Abraham, and there learned the first meaning of "Jehovah Jireh," viz., how "the Lamb of God has taken away the sin of the world"; and that we have also seen how, sheltered under the blood of the true Passover Lamb, we have not only been delivered from the judgment of God; but, coming forth from the burdens and bondage of sin, we have found ourselves free, because a redeemed people. Yes, not only free from death and from the power of Satan, but a rejoicing people able to say with the Israelites: "The LORD is my strength and song, and He is become my Salvation." But who does not know that, almost immediately after we

have received this glorious deliverance, it seems as if God had only been tantalising us with the offer of blessing as a mirage of the desert; for though we have been freed from Divine judgment, and from the old task-master without, there seems to be no deliverance from the activities of natural desire within, and no power to meet them as we start on the journey of the new life, no deliverance from that craving thirst which is in all men by nature, and for the supply of which there is no power in ourselves, and apparently no provision set forth by God: Hence, instead of the prospect of the Christian life being one of beauty, joy, and delight, as it should be—if faith were as true for the future as it is said to be for the past—all that many Christians seem to experience is, that there is death, death, nothing but death, in every sight and sound; for they have wants and desires which they feel must be satisfied, or else they will most assuredly perish; and yet, as they cry aloud in the bitterness of their thirst, "What shall we drink?" they are ready to charge God with leaving them in the wilderness to perish. They know not that the LORD can heal the very fountain-heads of life, and satisfy all lawful desires of nature even "in a dry and thirsty land where no water is." Hence their hearts go back to the "leeks and onions" of Egypt (*i.e.*

the low indulgences of the flesh when they were in captivity to sin), and they murmur bitterly against the LORD and their trials. But if they rightly understood the Gospel they would know that no sooner do we realise, as the redeemed of the LORD, our need of spiritual supplies and power (as distinguished from mere judicial acquittal and salvation through death), than we should hear the voice of the great Jehovah saying: "I am the LORD that healeth thee." And exactly as it was with the people of Israel, so the LORD God Almighty will reveal to us a Tree, which, being cast into the waters, shall make them all sweet, whether they be the waters that meet us in the pathway of life, or the bitter pools of our own inner existence. It is a grand privilege to know that we are "accepted in the Beloved," and have peace with God through the blood of Christ. It is delightful also to realise that we have been delivered from the burdens and bondage of sin by passing with Christ through His burial and resurrection; but to know that beyond all these there lies this glorious provision for the believer, that he shall never be left without full supply for his needs, and that when he looks to the waters which by nature are bitter and corrupt, and engendering death for all who touch and taste of them—this

surely (if believed and then experienced) would be "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Yet this is the very gift which is offered to all who will but learn to know and confess Jesus Christ to be LORD (1 Cor. xii. 3, and Phil. ii. 11).

"Jehovah Jireh" is now to be known as "Jehovah Rophi"; and strange as it is that men cannot see the application of this Old Testament story to themselves as Christians, it is still more strange that we should any of us miss the clear teachings of Jesus Christ with regard to the only true, and yet perfect, supply of "Living Water" for all who will take. How can we have failed to learn the lessons of St. John iv. 10; v. 2–8; vi. 35, 54, &c.; vii. 37–39?

There can be no refreshment or life power until God has sweetened the water; with us there is this difference, that we must not think so much of the waters that are outside of ourselves (though they may, of course, poison us if they be drunk), but we should think of the very source and fountain of our life, of that which is within, and which should be giving out pure water. For it is this source that requires to be healed; and while the LORD GOD has shown us by a picture from the history of Israel how the waters of Marah could be sweetened and healed, in order that His chosen

people might drink and live, to us the chief force lies in the words: "I am the LORD that healeth *thee*"—not only the waters without, but "that healeth *thee*"; for the man himself it is who needs to be healed, because out of the treasure of the heart proceed all the streams that either minister life or death to the man himself and to all that are around; and it is Jehovah alone Who can heal the fountain-head of those streams.

We might safely leave with Him what are called difficult questions in regard to the novel, the picture, the play, the amusement, and all the other matters upon which Christians profess to feel doubtful, if only we would look to Him to supply us with the sweet water of life; but it is the things that come out of the inner fountain that destroy spiritual life: as we read in St. Matthew xv. 18: "Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man," and the LORD, Who has given us the picture of the waters of Marah, has Himself made the application required by all: "I am the LORD that healeth *thee*." This includes, of course, the waters which are afterwards visible; for "I am the LORD that healeth *thee*," and if the man be but cleansed and healed, the waters that flow out will be sweet.

The Passover Lamb pictures cleansing of the soul from guilt. The Red Sea pictures the grave into which all men must enter if they would pass to the enjoyment of life and liberty in Christ; but it is when the man has entered into this condition that he begins to think of the spiritual processes, provisions, and powers of that life; of the draughts of enjoyment by which he may nourish and strengthen that life; and then he finds to his sorrow (and what Christian does not) that all the natural fountains and sources from which he would draw for his own satisfaction, and of which he would give to those around him (husbands to wives, parents to children, masters to servants, and friends to friends), are nothing but waters of Marah, full of bitterness and death, till the LORD gives a revelation of the Tree that can heal; and it took "Jehovah" to do this, for none could discover it for himself. But now, all that is needed is to apply the given remedy to the waters; and instead of being the medium of bitterness and death, the waters of Marah shall become full of life-giving sweetness.

What then shall all this mean for us? It is very beautiful to observe how at the outset of man's history, it was by a *tree* that he should have been saved from death, and have been made to

live for ever, even after he had sinned. For "a river went out to water the garden (of Eden) and from thence it was parted, and became four heads," and close to this four-headed stream in the garden of joy grew the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of life"; and man, when he lost his true position by sin, was prevented from partaking of the tree of life. The special reason given for this prevention was, "lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever;" and so when God graciously delivered the children of Israel, as a typical or figurative people, the first thing that He did was to make them pass through the Red Sea, as a token or symbol of that death unto sin, by which alone men can be delivered from their state of degradation and ruin, and then having brought them forth as a living people, redeemed unto God to be His special inheritance, He awakened within them the thirst for pure water; and when they had learned by experience that nature's supplies were corrupt, He showed them, through Moses, that a tree chosen and prepared of the LORD must be cut down and cast into the waters which were bitter, and by the tree of life the bitter waters were made sweet and life-giving.

A wonderful picture—full of typical teaching,

and far beyond the power of man to invent, notwithstanding the foolish things now said about the Bible. It required "Jehovah" Himself to prepare such a Book. Nor have we yet exhausted the typical teaching of Scripture upon this subject of the Tree of Life. For in the closing scene of the Divine Revelation, this is the picture presented to us for study: "And He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Thus does Jehovah reveal to us, as His perfect provision for sinners, the river, or fountain of life, proceeding out of His own eternal throne, with the tree of life both planted in it and hedging it on either side, that together they may give life everlasting to all who will take it. And the picture, as completed by the revelation of God, announces to us clearly and unmistakably that when man is made to live through the faith of the Son of God, he shall live for evermore by partaking of that beautiful life-giving stream that flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb, which instead of bitterness shall minister sweetness and

joy; instead of death shall supply life and delights for evermore.

Surely these may be described as very wonderful pictures; and now let us remember that when He was on earth, the LORD JESUS Himself most tenderly explained to us these pictures! Did He not tell us that He Himself is the water of life? To the woman of Samaria did He not say: "Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life"? Mark well these words, for they reveal even more than the pictures. The water that Christ gives is "to be in us a well," which implies not only the supply of the man's own needs "springing up into everlasting life," but more! For while the water shall be in him, slaking always his thirst, and giving him everlasting joy and peace, the idea of a "well" is that others also may draw and obtain supplies of water therefrom, according to their need. And so it is that, in St. John vii.—on the only occasion on which it is said of Jesus that He "stood and cried"—as if the tidings that He would offer were of special and world-wide importance—He says: "If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the

Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." From the man himself, when his life springs have been healed by that wonder-working word "Jehovah Rophi," shall flow streams of water which not only stay his own thirst, and make him feel that he is drinking of the water of life, but which pour forth from him as life-giving streams to the world around. "Jehovah Rophi" means so much to a true believer, that he has not only a power and strength for holy living himself, but he becomes a power to others, and really ministers to the "healing of the nations." Surely the cry of gratitude should go up from us all: "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

But in order to make the streams of water sweet and life-giving, the "tree of life" must, as we have seen, be provided by the LORD. That "tree of life" was the Cross on which Jesus hung when He died; and which, bearing the dying Saviour who was to be the Life of the World by entering into the water of death on their behalf, has taken away all "the bitterness of death" from the waters of earth. What formerly was death is now life, of which man has to drink; and as it was the first man (Adam) who embittered the waters of earth by sin, so was it necessary that the second man

(Christ) should pass into those waters of death, and, by the omnipotence of that "Jehovahship" which lay hidden within Him, should become a true life-power for all the nations of the world. Does the deep meaning of the Revelation commend itself to our souls?—that we pass from a judicial cleansing to an experimental; from the Passover sacrifice through the Red Sea to Marah; and though the desert looks so arid and hard as to frighten us, as we pass from the death place of Christ and commence our journey to Canaan; and as we come to an earth pool and try to drink we find that the water is only stagnant and bitter—yet, suddenly may we apprehend that glorious truth "Jehovah Rophi," "I am the LORD that healeth thee;" and find that that which was bitter and death-bearing before, has been made sweet and life-sustaining by Him. Here again shall we learn the blessed truth of the words "Jehovah Jireh," "The LORD will provide."

But to what, it may be asked, do these wondrous assertions refer? We can hardly fail to be struck with the unceasing recurrence of this beautiful idea of "Jehovah's" promise to heal, throughout the whole Scriptures, from its announcement to Israel: and how it seems to be applied to every possible requirement of man. "I

will heal their backslidings;" "I will heal their wounds and their diseases;" "I will heal that which was broken," &c., &c. Indeed, to every possible conception of trouble that may touch the poor, sorrowful, sin-stricken heart of man, the LORD would seem to apply this beautiful expression: "I will heal thee." "Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee," was the cry of Moses on behalf of poor leprous Miriam; and immediately the LORD replied with a word of grace and mercy that restored her. In Psalm ciii. 1–3, we read, "Bless the LORD, O my soul; who healeth all thy diseases." In Psalm cxlvii. 3, "He healeth the broken in heart." Again, we may remember how frequently in the Prophets the special idea of "He healeth" is found, and how it seems to be applied to every possible trouble; as, for instance, in Isaiah xxx. 26, "He healeth the stroke of their wound." Again, the moment the LORD JESUS began His ministry upon earth, what did He say concerning Himself? See St. Luke iv. 18, "He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted," &c., and St. Matthew viii. 17, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses," words specially applied to the LORD JESUS by the Evangelist from the writings of Isaiah, but which only found their fulfilment in Him when He began to heal, and healed all them

who came to Him—man, woman, or child. Did He not take the diseased, the afflicted, the broken-hearted, and heal them all? whether of their sorrows, their woes, or their sicknesses, and bid them all depart in peace, because he could say "Jehovah Rophi," "I am the LORD that healeth thee."

What then shall we claim for ourselves from this title? Granted that we Christians are not to have now the special earthly blessings that were conferred on Israel of old; granted that we are not, as in the time of our Lord's sojourn upon earth, to expect every physical disease to be healed by a word (for surely we live in another higher dispensation?). I would rather apply this text to our spiritual needs, considering the light that we possess under this dispensation of the Holy Ghost, and that spiritual blessings are far higher than physical; though I do not doubt for a moment that there are occasions, when God will heal the body by a miracle, if it be for the glory of Christ; but we have no right as Christians to lay too much stress on our bodily troubles, and to ask unreservedly for the healing of the flesh, as it might be our ruin if given to us by God. In regard to bodily or temporal troubles, we have no right to go one step further than Jesus did when, on that awful night in the Garden of Gethsemane, when the deep

agony of death was upon His soul, He cried for the first time (so far as it is recorded of Him) "Not My will, but Thine be done." Jesus asked for Himself, "O My Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Leave God to decide as an all-wise Father about every temporal or physical trouble. That is the becoming attitude of the Christian in regard to the body; for there are many greater blessings than mere bodily healing, and they might easily be lost by the temporary healing of disease! Jehovah *may* give this healing, and I do not doubt the stories I have read: why should I? We are dealing with an omnipotent God; and He can heal at the gates of death, if He will.

But I would far rather turn to spiritual matters, and ask if you know what it is to go with Abraham to Moriah, and then to go from the Passover to Marah? At Moriah, or by the Paschal sacrifice, we get pardon and life; but at Marah we find that the very fountain-heads or supplies of our natural existence are bitter; that we cannot sweeten the waters within; cannot overcome that dreadful self, that piteous infirmity, that miserable weakness, that abominable sin—that makes us dishonour our Saviour in the eyes of the world; and so it comes to pass too often that the

Lord's people are the scorn of the world around them, just as Israel would have been if they had died at Marah as they were, or as they well might have been when they refused to go forward into Canaan because of the difficulties that lay before them (Num. xiv. 13, &c.).

Surely, as Christians, we ought to stand still and think how terribly even those who profess to be believers are perishing from bitterness of heart, from temper, and from passion; yet before us there stands the blessed Saviour Who once died at Moriah, but who at Marah is alive to make the fountain of every life sweet. And let us remember that, as Christians, we were meant to give forth sweet waters—not bitter—in the home, in the street, in the mart, in the Church. Yes! it is ours to show, by accepting Christ as "Jehovah Rophi," that God has taken the disease, the wound, the bruise, the sore of our nature and healed it; and that when He heals, He heals so completely and so lastingly that none of the old evil likeness shall appear, just so long as we believe in Him.

I beseech you, therefore, as I charge myself, to take Christ Jesus the LORD into the very fountain-head of our life, and to remember that He does not die again. He is no longer the Paschal Lamb, but the living LORD; and you have but to take

the healing which He has offered for that carelessness, that impotence, that habit, whatever it is which is marring your peace and embittering your whole life, and by the grace of God it shall be known henceforth that the waters of your whole existence have been made sweet by Jehovah. Then will the LORD take you forward to the palm trees, the resting-places for His beloved, where He has provided wells of Living Water, and shelter from all troubles; and there, "lying down in green pastures, and reposing beside the still waters," the redeemed of the LORD shall listen joyfully to the voice of their Saviour, "Jehovah Rophi," "I am the LORD that healeth thee," and shall gratefully utter their song of praise and rejoicing, "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, Who healeth all thy diseases, and crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies." Still gloriously true are the words of the LORD which He gave by His messenger the Prophet Malachi: "Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise *with Healing in His wings;* and ye shall go forth and grow up ["gambol," R.V.] as calves of the stall." But never forget the purchase-price of your health: "With His stripes we are healed."

IV

"JEHOVAH NISSI: THE LORD MY BANNER"

"And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it JEHOVAH NISSI."—EXODUS xvii. 15.

"THE LORD my banner" is our special subject for consideration; and at the outset it may be well to remind ourselves that the word translated "banner" in our English Bible, is found in several different parts of God's Word under the rendering of "ensign" or "standard," so that we must endeavour to remember that there is the same idea in all the different passages. And who that has realised the needs of Christian life, and the defences that are required for power, protection, deliverance, and victory, in all the different battles of life in which we have to engage, does not see what an immensely comforting thought there is to us (as there was to Israel) in this expression, "And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it JEHOVAH NISSI," which means, "The LORD my banner." Doubtless they returned again and again, as they wandered through the

wilderness for forty years, to that place Rephidim, where they fought with Amalek, and they must have gazed with thankful hearts on that wondrous memorial; and every time they studied it, it would be an encouragement to them for the future. Thus God permitted one single victory to be constantly before their eyes, as a token of what He had in store for them in sending them into the Holy Land, which He had promised to their fathers.

And if for the children of Israel their altar was a memorial and an encouragement, so that they should never forget the Lord's mercies in the past, and never be doubtful of victory in the future, surely for those who call themselves Christians there ought ever to be before the eye of faith that altar of the Gospel which is Christ the LORD, from which we learn these blessed truths—first, that, no matter how hard the battle, how intense the struggle, how terrible the enemies who face us, the shout of confidence should always go up from our hearts: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" And if we have studied "Jehovah Jireh" at Mount Moriah, and seen what it is when the LORD "Jehovah Rophi" undertakes to heal all

our diseases, and to take away all our spiritual sicknesses, then ought we not to go forward to the battle with one great lasting cry of joy, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us, and gave Himself for us."

Yet, alas! we know how utterly different is the experience of almost all who call themselves Christians; is it not too frequently with us, as it was with Joshua the victorious, when, after that terrible defeat at Ai, he lay upon his face and cried, "O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies?" Never ought there to have been this discomfiture of God's people: it was their privilege always to have proceeded to victory; God had given the land to their fathers; He had pledged Himself to be their Deliverer and their Power. And if He were to be all this to Israel of old, if there should have been this unceasing triumph until the whole of the Promised Land was their own, what should it be for us Christians in our spiritual warfare? We come face to face with certain enemies who seem to be barring the way of our spiritual life and joy; ought we not to advance without finding them any real hindrance to our journey? And the word of "Jehovah" is as clear to us as to

Joshua when he lay upon his face in despair: "Get thee up: wherefore liest thou upon thy face?"

Surely there are causes for these defeats of the LORD's people; and they ought to be known, and when known, to be removed; for the LORD knows nothing of defeat or failure when making provision for His redeemed. Surely the LORD's chosen are intended to go forward with one unbroken series of victories; and I know not one single case in which the child of God need be defeated even for a moment; and surely it ought never to be said that "to the principalities and powers in heavenly places is being made known by the Church" that God's own children can possibly undergo an almost unceasing series of defeats at the hands of the very enemies whom they were meant to overcome, and against whom the LORD has made Himself an invincible "Banner." Calmly, and apparently without hesitation, Christians will say, "Our enemies are, alas! too strong for us; we cannot expect unceasing victory; we must naturally be overcome sometimes: remember the power of our enemies." Then, God counts for nothing; and if we were honest we should tell Him to His face that He is not able to do what He has promised, and that we must inevitably be defeated sometimes because the devil

and his hosts are stronger than the LORD God Almighty.

We know that "these things ought not so to be," yet we continue to be overcome from day to day, till it comes to be year after year; and quietly we accept the position of defeat, and say, "It must be so; it cannot be helped; we deeply regret it, and yet we expect that we shall continue to the end to be overcome by these terrible foes." On one occasion I ventured to say to a poor troubled soul, "Then tell the Lord Jesus Christ plainly that He is not strong enough to give you deliverance from your special temptations." "Why," she replied, "that would be rank blasphemy." "Yes," I answered, "undoubtedly it is; but there is only this difference, that I have said it out loud, and you have been saying it in your heart every day of your life until this present moment."

We need, therefore, to consider this matter more earnestly and solemnly, and to understand what is really meant by the words, "JEHOVAH NISSI, the LORD my banner." And to do this rightly, we should do well to think of the marvellous symmetry and order in which Divine truths are presented in this holy picture Book. There are few things which more prove the

inspiration of Scripture in every part thereof, than the fact that certain chains of thought run right through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. What man, for instance, could ever have invented the striking revelation attached to the Name of "Jehovah"?

We have seen (1) what it is to worship God, as "Elohim," as the Ruler of the universe, Who called all things into existence and upholds them by His Word. We also saw that, as "Jehovah," God loves to give, and that He delights in giving because He is Love. Hence, because He is such a wonderful friend, we saw that, under the Title of "Jehovah Elohim," He was all that could be required by man in the days of his innocence. But then came the fall; and to the first man who was brought into direct covenant with God by faith (2) "Elohim" revealed Himself as "Jehovah Jireh," the LORD Who will provide the Lamb that shall take away the guilt of sin and the penalty of judgment, and bring man into new life and covenant with his Maker. From thence we passed to see our God (3) as "Jehovah Rophi," on account of our need of healing; and that in order to meet the deep necessities of man's existence, the very fountain-head of whose being was distorted and embittered by

sin, the LORD graciously revealed to him the Tree of Life, and, bidding him cast that into the waters of Marah, assured him that he would find to his joy that the root of bitterness was gone, the disease was healed; and the man who obeys has always been enabled to go forward in the pathway of duty and difficulty, with every bitter thing turned into sweetness and blessing, and ample provision made for his every need and requirement.

But supposing that we have already reached that point in spiritual experience where the LORD has been made known as "Jehovah Jireh" the Provider, and as "Jehovah Rophi" the Healer, we have still much to learn concerning His great power and love; for then only in most cases does the believer realise, that there is a tremendous battle to be fought "against principalities and powers, against the rulers," &c. (Eph. vi. 12), and as he goes forward, feeling utterly incapable to face such foes, he learns from God's dealings with Israel how completely the LORD enables him to be "more than conqueror in all these things." In "Jehovah Nissi, the Lord our banner," he discovers that he may prevail exactly as Israel did against Amalek. The Israelites had discovered to their horror that there were greater foes before them than those whom they had left behind them in Egypt. So

the Christian, who is conscious that he has been delivered from judgment, from death, and from his grosser enemies of the flesh, and who knows that he has received the gift of eternal life, finds that he not only needs a new kind of provision, but that he is just starting on a career in which he must expect that his enemies will attack him unceasingly and severely. Then it is that he should begin to realise in Jesus the name of "Jehoshua," "Jehovah my Saviour"; and through Moses the law-giver we learn, to "set the LORD always before us" as our conquering Leader, against Whom no enemies can prevail. We think of Him now not as our Creator, or Life-giver, not as our Provided Sacrifice, or Healer, but as the One under Whose banner we should never be defeated.

That battle with Amalek was the first experience of Israel that there would be painful opposition to the LORD'S people in their journey, after having tasted how gracious the LORD is in giving salvation from judgment and from the hands of their task-masters. Then did they find how fresh enemies arise; and I think all will agree that the experience of Christians now exactly accords with that of Israel in the wilderness. No sooner were we brought out of the life of bondage to sin, than, to

our horror and pain, we discovered that instead of the liberty which we expected as the children of God, we were to be attacked by enemies, fierce, powerful, and numerous, against whom we were altogether impotent and helpless in ourselves. But here it is that we learn such valuable lessons from God's dealings with the children of Israel. The pictures of the Old Testament are very strikingly appropriate to all our spiritual experiences as Christians; and thus Israel is ever declared by St. Paul to be the type or shadow of the followers of Christ Jesus.

Against Amalek Joshua was to lead God's people, because Amalek came out against Israel (ver. 8). This attack, as you will remember, was made by their enemies just when Israel had received the miraculous gift of water that came welling forth from the rock at Rephidim. So, too, will it be found in our case that some enemy may always be expected to attack us immediately after any remarkable spiritual blessing or revelation of God's love and mercy in Christ Jesus. This is a most important truth for young Christians to learn. But there is more to be gathered from this typical history. For who was Amalek? Look at the words of Balaam in Numbers xxiv. 20: "Amalek was the first of the

nations:" the greatest, and the most powerful of those who would withstand their entrance into Canaan; the very people against whom Israel would be utterly powerless, considering their past history and present feeble condition. Moreover, they had every reason to believe at the outset of their journey, that they would never be called on to face this people as an enemy; for Amalek was a descendant of Abraham, through Esau (see Gen. xxxvi. 4, 12), and was therefore, though illegitimately descended, a quasi brother to Israel, and consequently the very last from whom they would have expected opposition or attack. But there is an universal law of the Kingdom of God that "a man's foes shall be they of his own household" — and no sooner was Israel delivered from bondage, and brought forth into the liberty of the children of God, than he found that his first and most determined foe was one of his own household. A most painful lesson to learn, yet applying to all the LORD's redeemed, that the most hostile will almost invariably be the very ones who ought never to have touched them, but should have been their friends! It was probably for this reason that the LORD, in the verse following my text, pronounced this tremendous judgment upon Amalek: "The LORD hath sworn that the

LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation," because, instead of assisting the LORD'S redeemed people, Amalek determined not to let Israel have a passage through his land, but opposed them to the uttermost, and thus incurred the indignation of Jehovah.

Of course, under God's condemnation, all such enemies must be destroyed; but in the meantime they are a sore trial to the faith of God's people. And, for Christians, are not the bitterest foes, and the most determinately hostile, those who are practically related to us as brethren in the flesh, but who even refuse us permission to journey quietly through the land: just as it is said in this chapter (ver. 8), that "Amalek came and fought with Israel," not that Israel went against Amalek. These are what we understand by that "world that lieth in the wicked one," and which hates the Christian as it hated Christ. And when this Amalek of the world comes down against God's chosen people, their duty is clear—they must resist them even unto death. To spare them is to ensure our own destruction; even as it was the destruction of Saul, the King of Israel, that, when called by Jehovah to complete the work of Amalek's destruction, he spared Agag the king (and apparently others) for his own personal credit and gratification.

The "latter end" of the spiritual Amalek, as of the physical, "shall be that he perish for ever:" that is, the world that opposes the Church of Christ (because they are His enemies, therefore God's enemies), must inevitably be destroyed from off the face of the earth, unless they will come into covenant with God's holy people, and become faithful subjects of our LORD Jesus Christ. Because they refused, the Amalekites had to be destroyed; and some four hundred years after their attack upon Israel, Saul, "the LORD'S anointed" (1 Sam. xv.), was commissioned to complete their destruction; but instead of obeying the will of the Lord, he tampered with that will, and thereby lost not only sovereignty, but his life. For what was the miserable end of King Saul? When, wounded on Mount Gilboa, he was filled with anguish and horror, there came to him a young man who, at his urgent request, "stood upon him and slew him, because he was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen;" and when that young man took the crown from his head and the bracelet from his arm and carried them to David, David asked him: "Whence art thou?" And he answered and said, "I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite." Thus did destruction come upon King Saul in its most terrible form of

retribution (by that word I mean judgment in its bitterest sense), because he "spared" of that sinful thing which he was called by God to destroy completely. So, too, will it come upon any man through the sin that he spares; for that sin will appear suddenly to his confusion in the day of his departure.

Strange, indeed, one might say well-nigh impossible, that any one should knowingly spare a sin without expecting that that sin will bring retribution hereafter! Surely the story of Amalek, from the beginning to the end, is filled with deep and solemn instruction for all. Originally the offspring of an unholy alliance (Gen. xxxvi. 12), their end was to be that they should never enter into God's house, but should be utterly destroyed by the chosen of the LORD, who were "to fight against them till they were consumed" (1 Sam. xv. 18). Yet never was that solemn judgment fulfilled, owing to the laxity and folly of Israel, until the days of King Hezekiah, when we read (1 Chron. iv. 43) that "the rest of the Amalekites that were escaped were smitten." Thus "the sinners, the Amalekites" (1 Sam. xv. 18), were at length swept away entirely, and their land was taken possession of by the chosen people of Jehovah. Was it for this that Hezekiah was so blessed of the Lord?

And have not God's chosen people of the Gospel dispensation to deal with foes exactly answering to Amalek. How, then, are we intended to deal with them? I suppose every one is conscious of foes like Amalek acting as obstacles to our spiritual progress, and making us feel that we cannot go forward to Canaan. There stands the enemy; and how shall he be defeated? We cannot face him alone, for how could we hope to defeat "the first of the nations," the chief representation of earthly power? Yet in the LORD Jesus Christ were we not placed in the heavenlies, "far above all principalities and powers," including not only the spiritual wickedness in "high places," but also "the rulers of the darkness of this world" (Eph. vi. 12), and if we are called to wrestle against them were we not meant to overcome them? The whole Epistle to the Ephesians is intended to show that the LORD'S people are not under their enemies, but over them; that they are not to keep our heavenly enjoyments from us, but that all such enemies are to be faced boldly, bravely, and with certainty of victory. But how? Not in our own strength any more than Israel could meet Amalek, but in that strength which quickly showed the Amalekites that they fought not against a feeble herd of unwarlike slaves, only just released from captivity,

but against the LORD Himself, Who sent His people to the battle; and then incited Moses to "build an altar, and to call the name of it JEHOVAH NISSI, the LORD my banner."

All can realise the pictorial idea of the scene, and the lesson conveyed by it, as to the way in which our victory is to be gained over the world that opposes us. On every hand are our enemies; but the LORD is also at hand, and the very moment that the fight begins, the voice of our spiritual Moses may be heard saying, "I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand;" thenceforth, if we believe in His power with God on our behalf, we fight, not in our own strength, but in the prevailing might of that rod which "Jehovah" has given as the true Banner of Israel. It is the Rod of power, the Rod of authority, which is being held up before Jehovah's Throne by our glorious Leader and Intercessor—Christ, and it becomes the means of victory for all who trust Him. The children of Israel were victorious at every point while Moses' rod was uplifted; and so may we be, if, as we pass to the fight, we realise that Christ is acting on our behalf, holding up His hand with the Rod of God's power. For not only does this Rod secure the favour of "Jehovah" and strengthen our faith as we go forth.

to the battle, but the very sight of the uplifted Banner strikes terror into our enemies.

Thus the Psalmist says (Ps. lx. 4), "Thou hast given a Banner to them that fear Thee," and (Ps. xx. 5), "In the name of our God we will set up our Banners." Why? Because we know that He will "send us help from the sanctuary and strengthen us out of Zion" (ver. 2). Therefore (says the man of faith) "we will rejoice in Thy salvation." It is the LORD who fights for His people; and "the Name of the God of Jacob (*i.e.* Jehovah) will defend them" (ver. 1). If we did but remember that the enemies of God's people have to deal with Him, and that He, the Omnipotent, is fighting His own battles through them, the victory would be assured, and God's people would go forward, treading their enemies down before them, and learning the meaning of those words, "Thy right hand shall teach them terrible things" (Ps. xlv. 4).

A little research will show at least forty verses on this subject—would that we had time to consider them closely; but I commend them to the careful study of God's servants, especially some eight examples in the Book of Isaiah, where the word "ensign" (R.V.) is used. This is the same word in Hebrew that is translated "banner" ("Nes"), and means a "flag" or

"sail," and generally "a signal or standard" (Isa. v. 26; xi. 10, 12; xiii. 2; xviii. 3; xxxi. 9; xlix. 22; lxii. 10).

Of course, in the spiritual application, and in our own personal experience, it is the LORD Jesus Christ Who is to be lifted up in the presence of the enemy; and then shall we under every possible circumstance find ourselves "more than conquerors" over all our enemies.

When once we have "tasted that the LORD is gracious," and, having passed through the experiences of "Jehovah Jireh" and "Jehovah Rophi," have come to realise "Jehovah Nissi," then, like Moses, we should "build an altar," where we may always see that glorious Banner of the LORD'S Name unfurled; and thus take courage for the battles that will yet have to be fought. Assuredly we shall need it, and that altar-banner will become not only a token of victory gained, but an assurance of victory in the future. The Christ who was sacrificed once for our sins, but Who is now alive for evermore as our LORD, is to be exhibited by His people before all the world as the Banner that will give victory to all who trust in Him, and which, when "held up," has never been known to fail.

Is not the victory of Israel over Amalek a

blessed encouragement to the people of God? The battle is hard, but the battle is the LORD'S; the fight may be long, but the issues are certain for those who put their cause into the hands of "Jehovah." The LORD'S victory is gained already, because he is the LORD, and if we are wise we shall, for the future, go forward, saying from the very depths of our hearts, "We will rejoice in Thy salvation:" for "we will lift up our banner," which is "Jehovah Nissi." For by the Word of our God we are bidden to remember that there has been given by the Father to His beloved Son "a Name which is above every name: that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue" (including the most hostile or bitter, even that tongue that, perhaps, embitters every part of home life, or that tries you sorely in business relations; that seems to cut like a sharp sword, and against which you feel utterly powerless—even *that* tongue) "shall confess" hereafter, when we have been made "more than conquerors through Him that loved us," "that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father;" and to every one who trusts Him it shall be proved before all, that "Jehovah Nissi,

the LORD my banner," has given a sure and eternal triumph.

Henceforth may the joyful cry be ever on our lips, "Thanks be unto God Which always causeth us to triumph," and "Which giveth us the victory through our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

V

"JEHOVAH M'QADDISHKHEM: THE LORD THAT SANCTIFIETH"

"Sanctify yourselves, therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God. And ye shall keep My statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you."—LEVITICUS xx. 7, 8.

"JEHOVAH M'QADDISHKHEM," or "the LORD which doth sanctify you," is the beautiful Title for our Creator, Saviour, and Spiritual Guide, to which it is now my privilege to direct your attention. It is an unfamiliar name to most of us, because the Hebrew word for "sanctify" (kawdash) has not been transferred to our English Bibles, either in the text or in the margin, as is the case with other Titles of Jehovah with which we are familiar. Yet will it ever be a Name most precious to those who rightly appreciate the "high, holy, and heavenly calling" (Phil. iii. 14; 2 Tim. i. 9; Heb. iii. 1), which we have received of God in our LORD Jesus Christ, and who have any desire to be "conformed to the image of God's Son," or to be "changed into the same image from glory to glory"; for were it not for this gracious

Name, "Jehovah M'qaddishkhem," "I am the LORD Which sanctify you," it would be utterly impossible for us to face the responsibilities of that "high, holy, heavenly calling"; it would be absolutely impossible for it, even in the smallest degree, to be carried out in us poor sinners while upon earth. But it is just because this subject is so frequently brought forward in this Book of Leviticus, which is the Book that treats of Israel's access to God, and of the spiritual worship required by Jehovah as the Redeemer of His people, that we Christians are enabled to learn so much, even from the Old Testament Scriptures, concerning true sanctification under the Gospel dispensation. For the Old Testament is in all things the Divine Picture Book of the New.

Perhaps many are not aware that in the two chapters following my text, this Title of "Jehovah" is six times repeated (see chap. xxi. 8, 15, 23, and chap. xxii. 9, 16, 32). In this last passage, the word is translated "hallow"; but the words "hallow" and "sanctify" are the same in the original; so that, wherever we read of any person or thing being "hallowed" (as, for instance, in the Fourth Commandment and in the Lord's Prayer), we are to think of it as being in Hebrew the same word as "sanctified," and though in the English language

there is a clear distinction between the two to many minds, we shall find, as we proceed, that they are really the same in intention.

It may seem remarkable that these beautiful Titles of Jehovah are found in the Old Testament and not in the New: but a little deeper consideration will show the reason for this. Under the Old Testament dispensation, it was necessary to teach even the redeemed people of God by many different pictures and types, because though delivered from bondage, their deliverance was physical, and in heart they were still separated from God through sin, and by nature knew nothing of spiritual access and worship. "The only-begotten of the Father" had not yet been "manifested in the flesh," and they could not therefore "know the LORD" (Jer. xxxi. 34), except by figures and types. Our light is, of course, infinitely greater than theirs; for in the New Testament we find "Jehovah" revealing Himself openly in the *Person* of His beloved Son: and we have but to look upon the LORD Jesus Christ as "Jehovah," and endeavour to realise Him in all His beauties and perfection, to see that every one of these Titles is to be found embodied in Him. To know Jesus, therefore, is to know the full meaning and force of the Titles; and to find that all the characteristics and features

of Jehovah in the Old Testament, are exhibited for our edification in Him Whom we are to confess as LORD. Wherefore, if we take the Old Testament and study it side by side with the New, we shall find that all the Titles of Jehovah, set forth by types and shadows in the former, are exhibited as facts which need no further explanation in the New, being exemplified, and carried out to their perfection, in the Person of our Saviour. Hence the two revelations are practically one and the same, but with this difference, that as we study the LORD Jesus Christ in the New Testament, we see the embodiment of those features or characteristics of the Godhead which in the Old Testament were only presented to us in shadows; and as we feel our own special need, we turn to Him, and find that in Him as our LORD and Saviour, all the requirements, or needs, of human nature are amply met, and He becomes to us a complete revelation of the Godhead in all its relations to man. But we must never forget that we are to look to the LORD Jesus as embodying not one only, but all the Titles of Jehovah. Though we perhaps require, and can appropriate, but one at a time, we should ever remember that in the LORD Jesus Christ is discoverable all that it is possible for man to know now of His God: first, typically in

the Old, and then Personified in the New Testament. Before we consider closely the subject of our text we shall do well to recall that, though the Godhead is revealed to us as "Three in One and One in Three," yet Christ Jesus is to us the perfect medium of Revelation, and it is He Who bids us look to Himself as the only "Way," or means, by which God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost, can be known and appreciated by man; He is Himself the power by which the Names of Jehovah are all to be brought home to our souls for present enjoyment.

But the Gospel further reveals to us that it is only *in* the Saviour, and *by* the Spirit, that we may rise to God the Father, and enjoy the full knowledge of the Godhead under any one of the descriptions which are so graciously offered to us both in the Old and New Testaments. And it is by that knowledge of Jehovah as "Three Persons in one God," which has come to us through the LORD Jesus and His Apostles, that we are enabled to appreciate the meaning and value of each and all of those glorious attributes which are revealed under Old Testament types "for us men and for our salvation."

For instance, if we take the Title of "Jehovah" alone, and ask to Whom it refers, we shall all reply immediately without doubt, The Name belongs to

God the Father, as GOD; but we also know that in Philippians ii. 11 we are specially told that "every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father;" and again, in 2 Corinthians iii. 17, we read: "Now the LORD is that Spirit," or, "That Spirit is the LORD;" so that we have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost all alike described as "Jehovah." And when we turn to the subject brought before us in our text, "I am the LORD Which sanctify you," or "the Sanctifier," it is most important for us to remember that while "the LORD our God is one LORD," yet that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are all equally concerned in this most solemn and essential work of our sanctification, or being made holy. St. Jude says in verse 1, "Jude the servant of Christ, . . . to them that are sanctified by God the Father." But in Hebrews xiii. 12, we read, "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate;" while St. Peter in his First Epistle, chap. i. 2, writes: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." So that, manifestly, with regard to sanctification, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are Each and All set before us as the

"Jehovah" to Whom we shall look as the One who sanctifies the poor sinner here on earth; while St. Paul, summing up the whole matter, and including the Three Persons of the Godhead in One, says: "The very God of peace" (*i.e.* God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) "sanctify you wholly."

Now, with this thought upon our minds, that we have the Three Persons of the Trinity all concerned in the great work of man's salvation, yet that there is but one God Who is to be made known to us as "Jehovah," let me ask you to realise in what a striking order the revelations appear before us, as we follow them through the Books of Scripture. They are so exactly what we all know to be required by mankind that it must inevitably strike us as one of the most incontestable proofs of the whole Book having been given by God. For all thoughtful students will admit that even the Revelations of "Jehovah" which are given to us in the Old Testament pictures, are all placed in the exact order in which they are needed by sinners. Thus, Sanctification is never spoken of till Redemption has been accomplished. In Genesis we are told that God "sanctified the seventh day," but this was meant for the enjoyment of *sinless* man, and the privilege would

never have been lost, but for the sin of woman, and then of man, at the instigation of the devil. The true Sabbath meant the Rest of God; and into that Rest man should have spiritually entered, and have known the enjoyment of it for ever and ever. But the moment that sin entered, the Sabbath of God had lost its meaning and attraction for man. Hence the true idea of sanctification necessarily disappeared, till the salvation of God had been brought home to a people whom He deigned to call by the name of His "son" and His "firstborn"—as in Exodus iv. 22, we read: "Thus saith the Lord, Israel is My son, even My firstborn;" and on that notable night when Israel came out of Egypt, the thirteenth chapter of Exodus opens with the words, "And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto Me all the firstborn." This is the first use of the word since the Sabbath was instituted by the Creator. "Sanctify the firstborn," is evidently spoken because the whole Mosaic Dispensation was to be typical, and the "firstborn" were accepted by the LORD as the type or figure of the whole people of Israel, whom Jehovah had already deigned to call His "firstborn and His son." But "sanctification" was now to commence (though, as you will observe, it was at that point

only a *command*, not a fact). But why would it *now* be charged upon Moses? Because redemption had been accomplished; and the power of the blood taken from that Paschal Lamb, in which was shown the meaning of "Jehovah Jireh" for Israel, had been already exhibited in saving the nation as God's firstborn, from the sword of the destroying angel. Salvation was secured to them from the moment that they apprehended the meaning of the Title "Jehovah Jireh," "the LORD will provide;" and the lamb had saved from destruction all who were under its blood. Moreover, they had learned, when safe on the other side of the Red Sea, the blessed force of the expression "Jehovah Rophi," and they were to believe that the LORD would heal all their diseases. They had learned also to trust Him as "Jehovah Nissi," "The LORD my banner," because He had overthrown their enemies and shown them how they might be an all-powerful people, "more than conquerors" over all their enemies, if they would but trust in the LORD as their Deliverer and Enabler.

So now, because their redemption was completely provided for (and made known to them by the Titles of Jehovah) in all the three great features thereof, viz., deliverance from wrath,

deliverance from diseases, and deliverance from all their enemies, they were duly qualified to hear and receive that word "Sanctify"; "Sanctify yourselves *therefore* (says Jehovah,—because I have redeemed you), and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God. And ye shall keep My statutes, and do them: I am the LORD Which sanctify you."

And it is exactly the same with regard to ourselves. Never till a man has apprehended what is meant by the substitution for himself of "The Lamb of God Which taketh away the sin of the world"; never till he has realised that Jesus Christ is the Saviour that healeth His redeemed from all their diseases; never till he knows the Christ of God as the mighty Conqueror that giveth us the victory over all our enemies—is it possible for him to hear the word "Sanctify" with proper appreciation. Alas! that any man should be so proud of himself, and yet so utterly foolish, as to think that he has power to sanctify himself before power has been given to him by "Jehovah"; and never is this given until we rightly apprehend and appropriate "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Then and then only shall we understand the full force of my text,

and know what is really required of us when Jehovah says, "Sanctify yourselves: FOR I am the LORD which sanctify you."

There must be salvation provided, accepted, and enjoyed, before power for holiness can possibly be known. Hence it is that St. Peter, in the opening of his Epistle, addresses charges concerning "Holiness" only to those who are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." But having thus carefully defined the position and privileges of those whom he addresses, he proceeds to charge them in the most solemn terms based on Divine provision and gifts, "*Wherefore* gird up the loins of your mind, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter i. 2, and vers. 13-16). Because redeemed, because delivered, because empowered, God requires, and He has a right to require, that for which He has so graciously saved us, viz., "Sanctification" or "Holiness unto the LORD."

But now we ask naturally, What is the force of the word "sanctify"? We have already said that it is one with "hallow," so that where we read of "sanctifying" we are to think of the word "hallowing," and where we read of "hallowing" we are to think of the word "sanctifying." At once then we can see that there must be many meanings to the word. For instance, whenever we meet with the word "sanctify" in reference to God, it cannot mean to "make holy," as it does in reference to man. It can only mean "to think of, or treat as holy," because He *is* absolutely and for ever Holy. So also when it is applied to the Sabbath of God, to the Name of God, or to anything that is essentially and inherently Holy, we must only think of the word as meaning "hallow" or "sanctify" it, by giving it its proper character. To hallow it, is to treat it as God would have it treated.

Let us remember, then, that everything connected with God is to be thought of, and accepted, as absolutely Holy, and that we are always to deal with the things of God as Holy, because the LORD our God *is* essentially Holy.

But when we refer to anything earthly that is not endowed with life, like the Tabernacle and its vessels, the Temple and its services, the times

and seasons which we set apart for Divine worship, we call them holy simply because they are set apart to holy needs or uses, and because God has ordained that we should treat them as His own; and we are to give them back to Him, because He has lent them to us in order that we may use them for His glory. He Himself recognises the Holy purposes for which He has bestowed them upon us; and He therefore commands us, as His creatures, to recognise the Divine reckoning, and to bow to it. This is faith, and God demands "the obedience of faith."

But when we speak of "hallowing" or "sanctifying" in reference to man, we shall find that, as a living creature, endowed with peculiar privileges and possibilities, the word conveys not only the idea of "setting apart for God's service," but that it has also the same positive meaning that it bears in relation to God—that it expresses active as well as positional properties—qualities of character and conduct, as well as dedication to certain uses. It is this which makes the word "Sanctification" so intensely solemn for man, and gives such unspeakable value and beauty to the words of our text, "Sanctify yourselves: for I am the LORD which sanctify you." Of course it *first* means

that we are to be set apart for God, and here at once we have reached the essentially practical part of our subject; for no sooner does Jehovah use the word "sanctify" in reference to man, than the thought arises instinctively that all, being absolutely owned by God, should of necessity be set apart for God, kept for God, and used for God's glory, without even a shadow of declension from the use which He has attached to His creation.

But as man differs from inanimate vessels and buildings in that he is possessed of a will, and that will having been distorted by reason of the fall, there must be something more in the word "sanctify" as applied to ourselves, than merely a positional dedication to the use or service of God. The LORD recognises that He has endowed us with the prerogative of "free-will"; but He knows that free-will has been perverted by sin. It is essential, therefore, that we should understand God's provision for His poor, helpless creatures in this as in every other point. Holiness there must be; but God alone could make it possible for man when once he had fallen from original righteousness. The Divine provision, as I have already mentioned, is to be found in 1 Corinthians i. 30: "Of Him are we in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness,

and sanctification, and redemption." There lies the possibility, recreated for Adam's children, the storehouse from which we may draw according to need and desire; and as the creature is endowed with free-will (though he has no power for action), and God Almighty claims Holiness from those whom He has redeemed, it behoves the creature, when set free from the bondage of corruption, to exercise his free-will by taking thankfully the provision that is made for him in Christ Jesus, the LORD.

But further, we should note that, in reference to man, sanctification is not, as with inanimate objects, a mere position or claim: but that it involves a process which will of necessity be continued to the last moment of our lives. Nor will we deal merely with a demand on the part of God, but with a perfect provision made by God, though the process can only be carried out by the co-operation of the human will with the Divine, which is made known by the teachings of the Holy Ghost as LORD. God will never *force* us to be holy; but patiently waits till we are "willing in the day of His power." It is the Holy Ghost who deigns to enter into the creature, and perpetually to instigate him to Holiness. Thus there is always in the child of God the working of the

Spirit in the inward man, unceasingly pleading with him to accept the will of God. "Yield yourselves unto God," says the Apostle St. Paul, "as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Thus Sanctification expresses the progressive action or working of the Spirit on the spirit of man, calling upon him to yield his will to the Father's; and through the will the Spirit claims the soul, or the man's "Ego," for God; while the soul, which always dictates to the body, will, as a consequence, use our "members" for the service of God.

This process is to be carried on throughout our whole earthly career, till finally there is reached the completion of the purposes of God, and at the end of his passage through difficulty and danger, the child of God shall come forth perfected—that is, "holy as God is holy" (up to the capacity of the creature). He shall be so holy as to delight himself utterly and only in God, Who has deigned to do such glorious things for, and in, him. The words of St. John shall then be fulfilled: "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is," and God's will shall be perfectly accomplished in man. All this we may look for under the title "JEHOVAH M'QADDISHKHEM," "I am the LORD which sanctify you." It is the Triune GOD Who accomplishes the

whole: the Father giving the command, the Son making the provision, the Spirit enabling the creature; and man, with his free-will, must co-operate with God, till finally there shall be the conforming of the creature to his Creator, and man is, in his measure, "sanctified" or made holy, like God.

The human part, as we now see, consists in accepting the revelation of the holy purposes of God, and the bowing down of the man's will to receive the Divine power. Then for the experimental progress towards the fulfilment of God's purpose, there must be the consecration of all that we have and are to God's will, and at last, as the final completion of the process, there shall be found, in the experience of all who believe, the accomplishment of the Master's words, "Ye, therefore, shall be perfect" (as the Revised Version has it), "even as your heavenly Father is perfect" (St. Matt. v. 48).

Can we at all apprehend the beauty of the demand and the provision? Do we see anything to attract us in the requirement and in the gracious offer of Jehovah? Then I think we shall be able, in some degree at least, to appreciate the marvellous force and comfort of my text, where the LORD has deigned to say to His firstborn,

Israel, and through him to us: "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God. And ye shall keep My statutes and do them. I am the LORD Which sanctify you."

But there is still much more for God's children to learn from this beautiful title "M'QADDISH-KHEM." Surely it brings before us (among other helpful ideas) this solemn consideration—that God sanctifies every one whom He has redeemed, in exactly the same sense, and for the same purposes, as the seventh day was originally sanctified. Now in that day God proposed to find rest and joy for Himself—in that he had completed His work of creation; and that creation was to respond to His holy will and give Him perfect satisfaction. For this He sanctified the Sabbath, and for this He sanctifies us.

But when man by sin disturbed that Holy Rest, and the sanctification of God's Sabbath was marred by Satan's devices, and by the folly of man, "the LORD God" graciously set Himself to restore that broken rest (for the LORD God can never abandon His purposes); and so, beginning with the creatures who had destroyed the Sabbath, He chose a certain portion of them, and called them His firstborn, and to them He gave the offer—if they were willing to accept it—of not only receiving for themselves,

but of bringing to the whole creation once more the blessed "Sabbath" of God, with all its sanctified enjoyments and blessings. And how would He accomplish this wonderful purpose? We have seen how it was partially or symbolically offered to Israel. Let us briefly see how it is to be fully carried out in ourselves.

We are told, for instance, that God purposes to do it by His will. But it was His will that Adam and Eve should sanctify the Sabbath, and they did not! Where then the power of that will for the sinner? See what is said in Hebrews x. 10, "By the which will we are sanctified, *through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*" This will is the will of love, which is more potent than a command. Again, in the fourteenth verse of the same chapter, the Apostle says: "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (or "are being sanctified"). And once more we learn from the same epistle, that we are sanctified by the blood of the Son of God, Hebrews xiii. 12, "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." (See Eph. v. 26, &c.; St. John xvii. 17, 19.)

So, for God's holy will, the provision is now perfect in the offering of His Son once for all as a sacrifice

for sin: and in the blood which was shed that we might be cleansed. These are the Divine provisions, and the Divine appeals, by which a sanctified Sabbath becomes possible for all who will enter upon it; and if time permitted we might proceed to consider a long series of the revelations of God in regard to this matter, which show how complete is His provision for the sanctification of all who accept the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: and how the whole creation which now "groaneth and travaileth in pain—waiting for the adoption, or redemption, of the body"—is hereafter to be sanctified through the Firstborn of God.

What, then, shall be said of any one who "counteth the blood of the covenant, wherewith He was sanctified, an unholy thing"? What can we say of any man who, notwithstanding this marvellous provision of God, gives himself deliberately to the workings of Satan, and chooses the pathway of danger and sorrow, instead of entering joyfully upon the pathway of Holiness or Sanctification? I do not think that there will be many such reading these words; but should there be *one*, I would solemnly offer St. Paul's beautiful appeal: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which

is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom. xii. 1, 2). And to the LORD's people, after warning them that they are already "set apart" by the high calling of God in Christ Jesus our LORD, I would say: Sanctify yourselves, by consecration to God's will, and by whole-hearted submission to the deeper yearnings of your being. For here alone is true blessedness, in yielding ourselves unto Him who hath called us, blessed us, sanctified us, and now claims us as His own, that we should be holy for ever, even as He Himself is Holy.

But we have by no means exhausted the depths or wonders of our text. The word of the LORD is, "I sanctify you;" and naturally we are led to inquire, How? Here again the Gospel sets forth clearly what the Old Testament only hinted at, or exhibited in type.

The Holy Ghost has now been given to them that receive Him. He is the Spirit of Holiness and of Power, so that the weakest may glorify God. If we reject His offers, we are doing "despite to the Spirit of Grace"; if we give ourselves to evil, or if we reject the purposes

of God that we should be utterly and entirely His, we are simply invoking God's judgment upon ourselves, and "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Remember what says St. Paul: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification;" and if we reply as so many do—Alas! I cannot believe it possible; it may be His will, but there is nothing in me that responds to His demands—then hear what the Apostle says in Philippians ii. 12: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; *for* it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." When we rightly appreciate the fact "that Jesus Christ is JEHOVAH to the glory of God the Father," we shall at once both seek and expect to be holy; because *He* enables. He gives the indwelling power of His Spirit, and with the indwelling power He stays and delivers us from corruption: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."

One has kindly written to say that "the words spoken have been helpful; but that there are certain sins yielded to day by day, sins that cannot be avoided or escaped from, owing to infirmity of the flesh: nor does the writer see how deliverance can be expected." Ought this to

be said? Shall it continue to be said? Is the corruption of human nature always to prevail? The writer tells me that in the particular case this is hopeless to overcome. Then—God is dead, to all practical purposes, and it would be useless for us to preach any gospel at all. But *is* God dead? Let the blasphemy be quenched and silenced for ever; and once again we would say, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification;" "Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead." Believe in the omnipotent love of God, and take the gift of God, which is eternal life in all its fulness, remembering that "*This* is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

Remember further, that if we hope to see Him as He is; if we hope to be "conformed to the image of God's dear Son"; if we hope to be "perfecting holiness in the fear of God"; if we hope to be sanctified utterly and for ever—then "every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself *even as He is pure.*" And it is idle (we know it, and each one should say it now to himself more than to any one else), it is idle to make the excuses which day by day so many of us have dared to make in the past—I cannot,

I cannot be "sanctified wholly" (1 Thess. v. 23), however much I wish to claim the omnipotence of God. All that is required of us by God is that we should set the LORD always, yes! *always* before us (*i.e.*, as one said, before the soul's eye); and as we see Him we shall purify ourselves, and "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;" and so our gracious Father, our perfect Saviour, our would-be perfect Sanctifier, the Holy Ghost, is saying to us all, however vile and unworthy, "I am the LORD JEHOVAH M'QADDISHKHEM." Therefore — be ye holy, for this Jehovah is your God.

VI

"JEHOVAH SHALOM: THE LORD SEND PEACE"

"Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it 'Jehovah Shalom.'"—JUDGES vi. 24.

"THE LORD send peace," or "is peace" (R.V. margin), is the subject for our present consideration: and once again it seems advisable, at the commencement of our study, to call attention to the remarkable fitness of the order in which, in God's Holy Word, the several Titles of Jehovah are brought before us. It seems impossible that this could have been accidental, or that the order could have been arranged by man. Nothing could more beautifully meet the needs of mankind, which one by one are exhibited in the dealings of the Creator with His creature, than the way in which, step by step, the character and the purposes of God are unfolded, through the progressive revelation which He has given to man, under the glorious Name of "Jehovah," with the Titles added thereto. With real delight and gratitude, I must confess to the discovery (1) of the incidental proof which this, with many similar tokens, supplies of the

absolute inspiration of Scripture as a whole; and (2) of the wonderful way in which God has deigned to meet every proper sense of need and desire, which the creature can realise, by adding descriptive Titles to the all-perfect Name of "Jehovah."

It will be remembered how we began by considering the abstract title of "Jehovah Elohim," God the LORD; and we saw how, at the very commencement of man's history on earth, the two were brought into combination to reveal God's purposes of love towards His specially favoured creature, man. Then we saw how, when man had fallen, and there arose a need which had not existed before, the LORD God, in His merciful goodness, gave the gracious promise of a Saviour; and by-and-bye to Abraham, His friend, as "the father of the faithful," He revealed His beautiful Name of "Jehovah Jireh," "the LORD will provide"; that is, He was pledging Himself, by means of the Lamb given on Mount Moriah, to supply all that is required by man as a sinner. Then we saw how He afterwards revealed Himself as "Jehovah Rophi," the Healer of all the diseases of His people; and then, because He knew that even His redeemed will have to face many enemies, and many temptations and dangers, He displayed Himself under the glorious title of "Jehovah

Nissi," "the LORD my banner," *i.e.* One who provides "a banner which is to be displayed because of the truth," and which to His faithful people is to be an invincible power of salvation against every enemy that can arise. The last Title of Jehovah which we have hitherto dealt with, was that of "Jehovah M'qaddishkhem." Under this Name He stands before us in an altogether new light, viz., that of the LORD who demands, and will bestow upon all His own people, Holiness corresponding with His own: "For I am the LORD," He says, "which sanctify you." Now we have, as it will be observed, been up to this point considering Titles which constitute the objective side of the Gospel, or the meeting of man's needs as a sinner by God's absolutely unsolicited goodness and power. He has set before us in the Titles already discussed, the hopeless ruin of man through sin, with the majesty and glory of Jehovah's power and love, in the provision of a perfect Saviour, One who meets every possible need of the sinner, One who can heal all that requires healing, and One who can defend against even the most terrible foes, while He undertakes to sanctify us wholly by His indwelling Spirit. And all this is objective, or provided by God independently of anything to be found in man.

It is only in the last of the five titles hitherto considered (viz., "Jehovah M'qaddishkhem") that we see the gradual transition from the objective to the subjective, or from the external provision made by the LORD, to the experimental application thereof to man. Even God cannot "sanctify" without man being "sanctified." No sooner, therefore, had "Jehovah Elohim" revealed Himself to the creature under those majestic Titles or descriptions, of "the Saviour," "the Healing Physician," and "the Deliverer from Peril," than, almost of necessity, He appeared before man with a demand upon him for submission to such a wonderful God; and this demand would inevitably be in accordance with the Divine character.

Consequently, no sooner do men accept the Divine provision of "the Christ," than Jehovah's Word is heard announcing, as an imperative requirement, that the creature should sanctify or consecrate himself, to please Him who has done so much for him. But Jehovah is Holy, inherently Holy; and not only can no *sinner* stand before Him, but nothing can ever make God lower the standard of His own perfect righteousness and character as "The Holy One," so as to meet the case of the creature who is subject to vanity or corruption. He cannot take us into His presence

"without holiness"; He cannot demand less than perfect holiness, "because He is Holy"; and so it is exactly at this point that He reveals to us that glorious Title—"Jehovah M'qaddishkhem," or "I am the LORD Which sanctify you."

Let us never forget that when He says, "Sanctify yourselves," the LORD is always speaking to a people of whom He can say, "I am the LORD your God which have separated you from other people . . . . And ye shall be holy *unto Me:* for I the LORD am Holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine" (Lev. xx. 24, 26). It is this, and this only, that makes "sanctification" not only possible, but blessedly certain for the believer; that Divine love having provided a full and perfect salvation in Christ, the holy God could now exhibit His requirement that the creature should be absolutely set apart for His service, which is the first meaning of "sanctify": and then that he should delight in fellowship with his God, even with the Divine character of absolute Holiness. And why? Because when God says, "Sanctify yourselves," and knows that the command will only terrify the creature because of its apparent impossibility, He immediately adds: "Jehovah M'qaddishkhem, I am the LORD Which sanctify

you." Clearly, then, He makes the demand, because He Himself will fulfil it.

But though from the very moment of Israel's redemption God offered Himself as "The Sanctifier," it seems that the creature has always looked upon the demand for sanctification as impossible; and so through the length and breadth of Scripture we find, that no sooner did the great Jehovah exhibit His own Holiness to man, than the creature shrank back instinctively, as if it were impossible for him to face it. Even Moses, we are told in Hebrews xii., not only drew back, but said, "I exceedingly fear and quake," so great and awful was the glory of Jehovah. Isaiah, too, when he saw the majesty of the Lord in the Temple, could only cry aloud in an agony of fear: "Woe is me! for I am undone—because I am a man of unclean lips." Even Daniel, the "man greatly beloved," could only "fall upon his face toward the ground," and feel that "there remained no strength in him, but that his comeliness was turned in him into corruption" (chap. x. 8; 9). And St. John, the beloved disciple, though he had leaned on the Saviour's breast on earth, when he saw the majesty of the LORD in Heaven, could only fall to the ground "as one dead." Consequently, whenever God demands anything from such poor

creatures as we are, it is only because He is prepared to enable for the fulfilment; and while He knows that there will always be a natural sense of shrinking from cowardly fear, which leads us to say to ourselves, "It is an impossibility, a hopeless thing, that I, who in myself am a poor miserable sinner, far removed from the Divine, should ever be what the all Holy and perfect One requires," yet we know that God has made the claim, and that it is an imperative demand that we should be holy, because He is Holy.

What, then, is required for the fulfilment of the demand? Why, this, that God should deign to go one step further in His manifestation of Himself as the true and perfect Jehovah; and while rightly making the demand for holiness, and saying, "I the LORD God will sanctify you," He should go on to say, "Jehovah Shalom," "The LORD is peace" (margin, R.V.). And this is exactly what meets us in God's Revelation of Himself! "Fear not," says Jehovah so frequently to His redeemed, that even the "worm Jacob" is made to realise that God has changed him into "Israel," and is prepared to "thresh the mountains" through him—"Fear not," I will keep thee in perfect peace, notwithstanding thine infirmities, thy follies, and thy

sins; I, the LORD, will provide thee with all power that is required, not only for thy journey in the wilderness and for the overcoming of thine enemies, but power even to fulfil the requirement of thy God, "Ye shall be holy, for I am Holy;" or, as it is given in a New Testament form, "As He which hath called you is Holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" (1 Peter i. 15); and all that is required of us is to trust and go forward, taking joyfully to our souls the full force of those words: "These things have I spoken unto you that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (St. John xvi. 33).

Dare not then to contradict Jehovah's word by saying that the thing is impossible, and then relapsing into folly and sin; venture not to question your Lord's command or demand; but let us believe in His promises, and so shall we prosper; and in the word now before us (Jehovah Shalom) we shall find unspeakable comfort and help when facing the LORD'S command to do impossible things; for it teaches clearly that "with God all things are possible," and when with man they are impossible, it behoves us simply, like Gideon, to trust in Jehovah, and

then to go forward, saying: "It is the LORD, let Him do what seemeth Him good."

Nowhere, even in God's Word, shall we find a more fitting picture or type, of the way in which strength is supplied to God's people wherewith to perform the apparently impossible, and to vanquish even the mightiest foes, than in the beautiful story of Gideon, the man of Ophrah? Everything in this history seems purposely arranged in order to bring to us peace and power, when our God is (as *we* say) making impossible demands, and when we find ourselves in the face of difficulty and danger which we cannot meet, or in a condition which we feel to be naturally helpless and hopeless. The one great truth that we all need to learn and to apply is this—"Jehovah Shalom," "The LORD is, or the LORD will send peace," even for "the least in His Father's House" (Judges vi. 15).

"Wherewith shall I save Israel?" and "Who is sufficient for these things?" is the cry of every coward heart when nature works; and to these questionings of ours the Gospel gives reply: "Such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;" and from the Old Testament history we

see how the LORD could use even Gideon when He had made him a "mighty man of valour," by the revelation of Himself; but probably none of us will be able to take in the full teaching of the type or to realise the force of the Title "Jehovah Shalom," until we have studied somewhat more closely the occasion, and character, of the revelation given to Gideon.

Let us look then (1) at the steps which lead us up to this "altar," which Gideon built as a memorial of God's marvellous goodness, and as a reminder to himself and to his people, never to doubt Jehovah for the future. At the outset of this chapter we find that Israel had fallen into a pitiful condition of bondage to Midian; and that this, like every similar distress, was on account of their sins. "For seven years the hand of Midian had prevailed against Israel," and so greatly were the children of Israel impoverished, that they seem to have felt that their case was hopeless. And this is exactly what happens now with the majority of so-called Christians. Week after week we ministers of the Gospel are confronted by persons who profess to believe in the LORD Jesus, as an omnipotent Saviour, and who yet will moan out in an agony of despair that there is no possibility of deliverance

for *them* from the lusts, the passions, the tempers, or the surroundings, to which they acknowledge themselves in bondage. Then let them face the awful thought that God must be untrue, and they had better tell Him so to His face; for St. John says: "He that believeth not God, hath made Him a liar." If *any* result is to follow from these studies of Jehovah, let us earnestly hope that this at least may be found, that every one who takes part therein may be led to say from the soul: "I never knew what Jehovah could be to the man who believed in Him. The past has too often proved my faithlessness and folly; God grant that things may be different with me from this time forth and for evermore." Trusting in the LORD our peace may be perfect, and we may be more than conquerors over all our foes!

Let us now look to the case of Gideon and see how deliverance is granted. In verse 7 we read that "when Israel cried to the LORD, the LORD sent a prophet unto the children of Israel" to tell them of all the mighty works which He had done for them and for their fathers, and how it was because of their many and grievous sins that the chastisements of God had now fallen upon them. So, too, in these days when the favoured of the LORD, like ourselves, become

"subject to bondage," and are prevailed over by our enemies, there is an almost universal acceptance of this servitude with a moaning declaration that it seems to be inevitable; but it is to such persons that we ministers are sent, as the LORD'S prophets, to say—"It is not 'Jehovah' Who has failed, either in promise or power, but it is the LORD'S redeemed who have fallen from their high position and privilege because of their iniquities, and through want of faith in their God."

It may be *one* man in a generation or in a nation who is chosen of the LORD to act as His prophet, and to "shew His people their sins," and another who is chosen, as Gideon was, to bring about their deliverance. But woe to that man who, being called of the LORD, shall refuse to give the message or to undertake the work of Jehovah. Many draw back on the ground of their insignificance or unworthiness, and ask like Gideon "wherewith shall I save Israel?" forgetting that "God hath chosen the base things of the world and things which are despised—yea! and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." Who was that prophet who showed Israel their sin, and prepared them to receive the goodness and mercy of the LORD? An absolute Nobody, whose name is not even recorded! And who was Gideon?

A man who says, "I am the least in my father's house," and who was reduced to such miserable straits that in order to get bread he had to "thresh wheat behind his father's winepress for fear of the Midianites" (ver. 11). Yet it is to this man that the angel of the LORD, who was Himself Jehovah the LORD, appeared and said: "The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour." Was this irony? Was it cruel satire? No, for it was the LORD God who spake, and He creates by speaking. Let us ever remember that when God says, it is done; and that he whom God addresses as "a mighty man of valour," should instantly realise that he has become so by the power of the word spoken. We all know the story of Napoleon, who, when a private soldier had done a noble deed, addressed him in some such words as these: "Captain, that was well done." Immediately the man dropped his musket and other removable marks of his former position, and proceeded to take his stand in the front as an officer. Upon being asked what he meant by such conduct, he replied, "The Emperor called me captain, so, of course, I am one." True or not as a matter of history, the tale conveys its own lesson. When the LORD speaks, it is done; and if He gives us a title, it is for us to assume the truth of it, and to act like that soldier.

But again we are told in ver. 14 that "The LORD" (in ver. 12 it was, "The angel of the LORD," which shows that the expressions are one and the same), "looked upon Gideon and said: Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites."

How wonderfully the LORD deals with men whom He is going to bless! He is, perhaps, even now appearing before one of us who profess to believe in Him and saying: "The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour;" yet the man draws back, as Gideon did, and says: "Whereby can I hope to wax valiant in fight, seeing that I am but small and of no reputation?" Then the LORD looks upon him, and with that look of the LORD the man ought at once to be enabled to face even the mightiest hosts of Hell or the world, and to save any number of his brethren to whom Jehovah may send him. But, once again, the heart shrinks and says: "O my LORD, wherewith shall I save Israel? Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." Well, thank God if this is true; for then one is exactly the man whom the LORD God demands for His work, "the very least in his father's house," so that there is no excuse, but rather a claim, in that; there is no need to shrink from the privileges

which God gives, because one is realising one's own absolute impotence. Peace and power come by trusting in Jehovah and not in self. There was, in Gideon, the faithless, though natural, rejection of God's call, because he sought to evade responsibility. How true to human nature! How exactly like ourselves! Yet it is just at this point that the words of Divine ability are to be heard, whereby the worm of earth is to be enabled to "thresh mountains." "Surely I will be with thee, and *thou shalt smite* the Midianites as one man."

Then it is that there comes from the semi-hopeful, semi-faithless heart, the request that if this was really the angel of the LORD, and He was honouring the unworthy creature with a manifestation of "Jehovah," He would deign to accept the "Minchah," or "meat-offering," which Gideon would bring to him as a present. This word "Minchah" is the term applied in Leviticus to the meat-offering and the peace-offering, and should be distinguished from "Corban," which generally refers to the burnt-offering. The word "Minchah" means a voluntary gift or donation; and it is used in a double sense—sometimes of a gift from God to man, and sometimes of an offering from man to God. The term is specially applied to the meat and the peace offerings, be-

cause there the LORD first deigned to accept the gift from the. offerer, and then graciously gave back part of it for consumption by man: "And the remnant of the meat-offering shall be Aaron's and his sons" (Lev. ii. 3); and "The flesh of his peace-offerings . . . shall be eaten," &c. (vii. 15). Thus did Jehovah graciously in most cases remember man's needs; but when the offering was only made as a means of testing Jehovah, the whole of it should be consumed by fire as a rebuke of unbelief. For Gideon was really questioning whether his visitor was an angel of Jehovah; and so while he begged Him to tarry until he should make ready his meat-offering or present, his whole heart would seem to have been troubled with doubts and fears. Then came that remarkable act by which the angel of the LORD dispelled at last all Gideon's foolish doubts. For he put forth the end of the staff that was in His hand: and immediately the offering disappeared from the rock whereon He had ordered it to be placed; "for there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight." But though Gideon no longer feared men, or doubted his high calling, he seems still to have been terrified at the thought of personal dealings

with Jehovah. For when he perceived that He was an angel of the LORD he said: "Alas! O LORD God, for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face."

And how painfully do we most of us follow in his steps—doubting the LORD'S mercy and power to the last possible moment. It may be that at this very time the angel of the LORD is calling us forward to some special enterprise—in which the glory of God and the salvation of man are concerned. But alas! as it was with Gideon so is it now. Most people seem to think that they are showing their humility, when they put aside the personal call of the LORD, and begin to moan over the sad condition of men in general. The angel said to Gideon, "The LORD is with thee." Gideon replied, "If the LORD be with *us*." But the LORD did not say that he was with the nation at large. He was *not* "with Israel" as a people, because they were not *with* Him in the true and proper sense of that word "with." The LORD'S word to a people who have had opportunity, is this: "The LORD is with you, *while ye be with Him*" (2 Chron. xv. 2).

But such is the faithlessness of God's chosen agents, that not even yet could Gideon take the full teaching to his soul. But instead of his being

rebuked for his ignorant folly, there came a voice to him from heaven (for "the angel of the LORD had departed out of his sight," ver. 21): "Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die." Then at last did Gideon realise that "perfect peace" which the LORD can give to those who trust in Him, even before they have entered upon the real struggle of life, and in which He can keep them throughout it all. "Jehovah Shalom," "The LORD is (or sends) Peace," was the cry that broke forth from his thankful soul. And that will surely be going forth from every member of Christ's Church, the moment that the soul's eye is opened to see how utterly foolish we have been in the past, and why the LORD'S people have been in bondage to Midian. "Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it Jehovah Shalom, the LORD is peace" (margin, R.V.).

Let us observe that the altar of peace is not erected by believers to propitiate Jehovah, or to obtain favour with God by offering sacrifice thereon, but to express gratitude for peace already bestowed, before the battle or service to which we are called has commenced. It will be no proof of faith and trust in God to say, "Jehovah sends peace," *when the battle is over;* but it does glorify the LORD if "*in the fires*" we are enabled to say,

"He is our peace." Yes, peace, perfect peace, should steal over any man's soul when Jehovah has shown that He will meet every possible need—the need of bravery, the need of wisdom, the need of power, and the need of supplies wherewith to meet every enemy, and to become the deliverer of his people. The LORD sends peace to the man who trusts Him, because He wishes to make use of him; and we shall never be strong *for* the LORD till we are strong *in* the LORD, and we never shall be strong *in* the LORD till we accept Him for what He is. This is faith, and "faith in God" is, as we know, the one and only thing which the LORD Jesus demands of His disciples (St. Mark xi. 22, 23); and then, as He assured us, we can bid mountains be removed.

For if we believe in "Jehovah Jireh," "The LORD will provide;" if we have realised "Jehovah Rophi," "The LORD is my Healer;" if we have taken in the full force of the words "Jehovah Nissi," "The LORD is my Banner," and then looked upon Him as "Jehovah M'qaddishkhem," "The LORD my Sanctifier"—we ought surely to be able to say with boldness: "The LORD is my peace, or helper, and I will not fear what man can do unto me." "God has called us to holiness," because He would have us utterly His own, and wishes us to

delight in Him alone, when "we see Him as He is"; but our enjoyment of God hereafter must depend entirely upon our faith in Him while upon earth, and upon the measure in which we accept the strength that He gives as "Jehovah Shalom, the LORD our peace."

But, once again, we must carefully notice the words: "Peace be unto thee, thou shalt not die." What a glorious assurance is here given that it is to life, and not to death, that Jehovah is ever calling His chosen vessels of grace. To us, as to Gideon, He comes to give life; and to each soul that will hear Him He says: "Peace, peace, thou shalt not die." Let us seek to realise the full force of these words. It matters not how sinful, vile, and helpless we may be: even the worm may look up into the face of Jehovah, with no sense of terror and with no thought of judgment against him when once he has heard and believed these words: "Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die."

And what is this but to realise St. Paul's words to the Romans, where, after depicting the universal depravity of man, and the marvellous provision of God in Christ Jesus our LORD, he breaks forth into that joyful cry (chap. v. 1): "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace

with God, through our LORD Jesus Christ." Let us never again turn the assertion into a hope, and say: "We hope that some day we may have peace." This is how many would mutilate Scripture, and turn God's facts into feeble aspirations or desires. Of course I am aware that in this passage some manuscripts have ἔχωμεν instead of ἔχομεν; but let us cleave to the Authorised reading: "We *have* peace," that is, peace is flowing forth from the throne for all who will accept it—a peace that tells not only of pardon, but of life and power for the sinner. "Fear not," it says, "thou shalt not die, but shall be more than conqueror over all thy foes." There is no death to the man who accepts death with the LORD Jesus Christ, and no possible defeat to him who is made strong in the LORD. He can no longer fear anything; why? Because his Maker, Who is now his Redeemer, offers to give him not only peace *with* God, but peace *from* God—a peace that flows from the throne of Jehovah, and that cannot, therefore, fail the man who will take it as God's gift; peace, perfect peace, under every possible circumstance.

This is not like that peace of the wicked who cry to themselves, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace," simply because (or when) they see

no dark cloud in the skies; but a peace that springs from the sound of Jehovah's voice. "I create the fruit of the lips; peace, peace, to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him." It is "the fruit of righteousness that shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever." It is because it is God's gift that it cannot fail. It is the Divine LORD, "Jehovah Shalom," Who is speaking to "the least in His Father's house"; and in the face of all the difficulties and dangers of life, He says: "Fear not, neither be discouraged" (Deut. i. 21), but first go home and tell all the wonderful things that God hath done for thee, and how He hath spoken to thee this blessed word: "Go into peace" (as the word is in the original in St. Luke vii. 50).

Hast thou to fight against foes who have held thee in bondage, perhaps for seven long years or even longer in the past? Hast thou to fight against some awful power of sin which has held thee down as a bondslave from the very earliest days of thy life? "Fear not, thou shalt not die;" but live, and declare the wonderful works of the Lord! Art thou eager to become a messenger or missionary to others, and to tell of God's love to the people around thee? Then shrink not, nor fear; for the battle is the LORD'S,

and thou shalt yet, if thou believest, become a saviour to all to whom Jehovah shall send thee. "Behold! the LORD thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it" (Deut. i. 21). And if thou hast peace *with* God by the blood of the Lamb, peace *from* God by the gift of the Holy Ghost, thou shalt also have peace, perfect peace, *in* God under all the trials of life. For it is of the Triune Jehovah that the words are spoken: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." "Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength."

And now as we draw this humble meditation to a close, permit me to ask with all earnestness and solemnity whether we have indeed apprehended that this wonderful gift of Jehovah is meant for every one of us, and should be accepted in its fulness, even while we are reading these words? I almost shrink from saying this, for fear of invoking unbelief; but I may not hide from myself or from others the fact, that not to take, and use, *is* to reject God's gift, and to make Him a liar. Do we believe it? Take rapidly the three thoughts which we have been considering. First, let us think of peace *with* God! How can this be otherwise than absolutely perfect, when it is

in Christ Jesus the Son of God, Who Himself is Jehovah. "He is our peace;" "He made peace;" "and He came and preached peace to you which are afar off, and to them that were nigh" (Eph. ii. 14, 15, 17); therefore, without question *that* peace must be perfect, because it is before God's throne in the Person of Christ, and He is absolutely one with God.

Then let us think of peace *from* God! This also must be perfect, because it is ever pouring forth from the perfect fount of all peace. It proceeds from the absolutely perfect God, who is so often described in His own word, as "the God of Peace" (Rom. xv. 33; Heb. xiii. 20); and how can that which flows from Him be otherwise than perfect? Perhaps no professing Christian would dare to dispute these two.

But when we come to the third stage, *i.e. experimental* peace in the face of indescribable dangers, or in the face of foes like the Midianites or the Anakim giants, how many shrink back and say, without any thought of their own wickedness, How can peace be perfect under circumstances such as these? And yet, remember that we are still speaking of the peace *of* God, as the source from which our subjective enjoyment of peace is to be drawn; and all that we have to do is to press our-

selves with the inquiry—Can the peace *of* God be otherwise than perfect?

The LORD has given the preacher to see, while studying this subject for his people, that there never can be anything but "perfect peace," even in this the third and most practical stage of our subject. For, what is "Peace"? It means the application of the power of Jehovah to all circumstances and conditions; and if rightly understood this cannot do less than produce a great calm, a holy stillness, an unruffled surface, which not even the most untoward external events can touch. Only that part of our being in which this calmness exists is really being kept in peace; but wherever there is this "keeping" by Jehovah, the peace must be assuredly perfect; for where there is restlessness, or fret, there is not peace. Moreover, it is not we who keep God's peace, but the peace of God that is to keep us. Just so much of our being as is kept back from God (and alas! there will always, while on earth, be much of our being that we do not know), so far we shall not have perfect peace; for the peace of God only keeps what the creature gives Him to keep! But wherever His peace enters it must be perfect. How much, then, of our being are we prepared from this moment to give to Jehovah

to keep as His own? Our experimental peace shall be in exact proportion to the measure and continuance of our "committal."

It puts the preacher to shame; it puts his readers, perhaps, to shame, to think how little we have been kept in perfect peace in the past; but it is better for us all to know and to remember for the future, that He will only keep what we give to Him, but that He never fails. "He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him," says the Apostle.

How much, then, shall we now commit to His keeping? Again and again people say: It seems perfectly clear and bright for to-day; but what of to-morrow, with its unknown dangers and duties? Alas! here comes in the sin of unbelief with almost all of God's children, that they take back that part of their life from God which is to them unknown, and think that they are at least called to think of this, and arrange it for themselves. And so it is that Gideon's altar of peace is so rarely erected; for that altar implied perfect peace for the builder, even in the face of the mighty armies of Midian, of his father's opposition, and of the whole nation's rejection of him as a foolish enthusiast.

I know that our whole being cannot be per-

fected here, nor shall we "know as we are known," until we pass into the presence of God; but whatever we give into the keeping of our LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ He undertakes to keep for us in perfect peace even now. Let us arise and build our altar of holy gratitude and joy, calling it as Gideon did, "Jehovah Shalom—The LORD is, and sends, peace;" and then go forth to the battle, and to the work of saving others, with the confident cry of St. Paul in our hearts, "I can do all things through Christ Which strengtheneth me."

VII

"JEHOVAH ROHI: THE LORD MY SHEPHERD"

"The LORD is my Shepherd."—PSALM xxiii. 1.

"JEHOVAH ROHI: The LORD my Shepherd"—how familiar the title, and how frequently discussed! Perhaps of all the names with which we are dealing, in connection with the glories of Jehovah, there will not be one so familiar in its sound as "The LORD my Shepherd"; and "every one who names the name of Christ" will immediately say —He it is of whom the Psalmist speaks in these words. Hence the question will perhaps arise to the lips or hearts of many—Why then take the trouble to consider this Title any further? Who does not know what is meant by "Jehovah Rohi, the LORD my Shepherd"? Yes, we know it, we know it; I trust we know it well. And I would fain hope that all who read these words can speak experimentally before God and man as to the inestimable value of having the LORD Jesus Christ for their own spiritual Shepherd; for all to whom my words are addressed, must have

heard those wonderful words from the LORD Jesus' own lips: "I know My sheep and am known of Mine." It would be a terrible thing, therefore, for any to whom the blessed Saviour has spoken, if they could not say of the great and good Shepherd, "He is mine."

And yet who would think that the preacher was justified if, when he has proposed to deal with the Titles of Jehovah, he left out this exquisite one from his list? Perhaps by many hearts it will be considered the sweetest of all; and by very many, I fear, it greatly needs application. In short, there are none who could afford, or who would rightly wish, to omit it. Surely there are treasures in the hearts and homes of us all, which, however familiar they may be, we are never tired of displaying or describing. What means it, that a lady seems always to find pleasure in exhibiting her jewels to her neighbours? Every one knows the look of them, yet she daily displays and is proud of them. And what means it that a man, who is the possessor of titles and decorations, feels it his duty to exhibit them on all public occasions? Why do they thus naturally bring forward these things, if it be accounted unbecoming to display or to discuss what is familiar? Partly because they delight in their

possessions, partly because it would be a slight to the donor, if these things were not gratefully worn and exhibited, and partly because it is an incentive to others to seek that similar honours and blessings may be bestowed upon them. And for all these reasons we must be perfectly aware that the man who is dealing with the Names of Jehovah could not possibly leave out "Jehovah Rohi."

And when we proceed to consider this beautiful expression, do we not feel, as with the other Titles of Jehovah, how exactly the Holy Ghost has met the needs of man while on earth, by bringing in the Title of "The LORD my Shepherd" at this particular point in the list: though perhaps few of us have ever thought how exactly it occurs at the point where it is needed in the soul's experience. I once pointed this out to a highly educated Hebrew Christian, and he agreed with me that it was most remarkable, and well deserving of attention, that the Titles of Jehovah which appear from Genesis to Ezekiel, are found exactly in that order in which each one is needed for a soul's instruction and guidance in the truth of the Gospel, as set forth by the LORD Jesus Christ and His Apostles.

We have seen something of the meaning of the

Name "Elohim," as the Creator and Ruler; and of the life offered to man by Jehovah "Elohim"; something of the provision made for sinners by "Jehovah Jireh"; something of that wonderful healing which comes by "Jehovah Rophi"; something of the victory we may receive in "Jehovah Nissi"; something of the sanctification offered to us under the title of "Jehovah M'qaddishkhem"; and something at least, I hope, of that peace which has been provided for us in Christ Jesus, and which should be commemorated by our altar of "Jehovah Shalom." And what next will the soul naturally and assuredly require, but that which is expressed by "The LORD my Shepherd"? For while it is blessed to have been created and quickened by "Jehovah Elohim," and still more blessed to have been saved from the sentence of death, and then blessed with healing, victory, sanctification, and peace: yet there still remain the walk, the wilderness, the weariness, and the wants (not to speak of the difficulties, the dangers, and the duties) which constitute the inevitable conditions of man's life upon earth; and how can these be met or provided for, but by that great and good Shepherd Who alone understands and can supply all the needs of His sheep. "Jehovah Rohi" is exactly what every child of God requires

as he looks out upon the untrodden and unknown pathway of the future; but, with Him for our Leader and Keeper, we start well provided for in all things, and need have no doubts or fears in regard to any part of our journey: well provided for, in the face of our foes; well provided for, in regard to our wants whether temporal or spiritual; and though utterly powerless in ourselves to meet and overcome the daily difficulties and trials of life, we may step out in perfect confidence and peace when once we can say "Jehovah Rohi: the LORD is my Shepherd."

Then surely, if instinct and Scripture alike agree that this Title comes exactly where it is wanted, we should be ready to start forward at once through the wilderness (unless we have already passed through it), that we may enter speedily into the true Canaan; and then, climbing the mountains and descending into the valleys of that good land which God will bestow upon us for unbroken enjoyment, we shall find that alike for wilderness trials or Canaan privileges, nothing else is required but "the LORD my Shepherd" to keep us in perfect peace and satisfaction of soul.

But before we discuss the meaning of "The LORD my Shepherd," we seem almost compelled to inquire whether that wonderful Title does not

necessarily involve its correlative; that is to say, does not our use of the term "Shepherd," as applied to Jehovah, involve the fact of our being His sheep? For how can there be a Shepherd without the existence of sheep? And how can we dare to say "The LORD is my Shepherd," unless we have accepted the position and relation of His sheep? But we must not forget that the adoption of this title in reference to ourselves, demands, of necessity, a due realisation of the proper position and duties of Jehovah's sheep. Let us remember at the outset that the good and true Shepherd never expects or allows His sheep to commingle with the wild beast of the field or the boar of the wood (Ps. lxxx. 13). He looks upon *them* as the enemies of His flock, and as altogether opposed to His work as a Shepherd; and unless by a miracle the wild beasts can be turned into sheep, they can never be reckoned among His treasures, but will rather be looked upon as those whom He is compelled to destroy.

Oh! that all could be compelled to remember this, that while the LORD Jesus is craving to be their Shepherd, He cannot work *for*, but *against*, wild beasts; which means that, so long as men deliberately serve the world, the flesh, or the devil, they are the "enemies of the cross of

Christ," and can never be numbered among the flock of Jehovah.

We may not experimentally know much of the value and beauty of this Title; but we all know enough to realise that the position of "Shepherd" involves protection, guidance and supply, tenderness, forethought and provision of every kind for those who come under the title of His sheep, and that the position of "sheep" implies want and weakness, ignorance and feebleness, with entire separation and submission to the will and care of the Shepherd. We also know that no Shepherd is expected to see to the wants of wild dogs and other foes of the flock. He must rather drive them away than allow them to remain near the flock. It is on this principle that we are told by our LORD Himself: "Give not that which is holy to the dogs." Of all who read these words I trust there may not be one who would be designated, by the Great Shepherd Himself, as a dog; but we must remember that when we speak of dogs, we are compelled to think of many whom the world highly esteems, and our hearts should go out to them with tender yearnings and love, for God can save dogs and make them members of His flock. So while we speak of the sheep, let us think much of those who are as yet "with-

out" (Rev. xxii. 15), and who know not the LORD.

And now, who are the sheep? Are they not those whom the LORD has redeemed at heavy cost to Himself, and whom He has recovered out of the hands of His enemy, Satan, by the sacrifice of Christ's most precious life? But who are "*His own* sheep" (St. John x. 4)? Are they not those who, gradually beginning to think of the LORD as their Shepherd, seem to find more and more pleasure in obeying His call, till at length one look of His eye is sufficient for their guidance? Thus we read of Jehovah saying, "I will guide thee with Mine eye;" while the sheep reply with holy joy, "Thou art with me: Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me" (Ps. xxiii. 4). Are they not those who learn to know and obey the voice of the Shepherd at every turn of their lives? The LORD'S sheep know the voice of their Shepherd, and they follow Him gladly as "He goeth before them." Therefore, when we speak of the LORD'S own sheep, we speak of those who have heard and obeyed the call to submit themselves to Jehovah as their Shepherd, and who, one with another, are knit into a holy fellowship in the obedience of faith. What more remarkable than the links that seem to bind sheep to each other

— one leading the whole flock, though not really qualified to be their leader—and ofttimes to their destruction if the leader fall over a precipice. Their adhesion to one another has even passed into a proverb, so that we often speak of "following like a flock of sheep." What more remarkable, again, than the boldness with which poor coward sheep will face anything for the protection of their young? And should not the LORD'S people, if they are really His sheep, learn from the humble creatures to whom the Holy Ghost has compared them, how close are the links which bind the whole family of God to one another, and how they should at least be as humble and as thoughtful for each other as the beasts whom we (perhaps too readily) speak of as "poor silly sheep."

What then shall we say is really involved in taking to ourselves the position of sheep, under this beautiful expression, "Jehovah Rohi"? We shall hardly do justice to it till we turn from the Old Testament picture to consider what is given as its explanation in the New; for the marvellous depth and beauty of this Title can only be appreciated by adding the New Testament teaching to the figurative expressions of the Old. It is a remarkable fact that we learn nothing from the Old Testament, till we come to the writings of the

Psalmist and of the Prophets, in connection with this figure of a Shepherd as applied to the LORD; though David, and the prophets after him, apply the Title to Jehovah, as expressing both a national and an individual, relation to the children of Israel, which was thoroughly to be appreciated and accepted by all, though they gathered it rather from the earthly figure, than from any directly Divine revelation from Jehovah Himself. Of course, I do not forget that in Genesis xlix. 24, where Jacob is speaking to Joseph of "the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob," as strengthening him for the battle, he adds: "From thence is the Shepherd, the stone of Israel;" but those words are, at least primarily, spoken of Joseph. Again, in Numbers xxvii. 17, where Moses is speaking to the LORD concerning his own death, and praying that a man might be set over the congregation to go out before them and to go in before them, the leader of Israel prays that "the congregation of the LORD may not be as sheep which have no shepherd;" but here also the word is clearly used concerning Joshua as a *man*.

Once again, in 1 Kings xxii. 17, and in the parallel passage, 2 Chron. xviii. 16, where clearly the king of Israel is spoken of, Micaiah, the prophet, tells how he had seen the vision of Israel

"scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have no shepherd."

These are the only three passages in which the expression appears to have been used in any figurative sense, until it was applied to Jehovah by the Psalmist David in our text. Of course it may be said (and said rightly, I believe) that, though none of the preceding passages refer directly to Jehovah—yet in a secondary sense, He alone could meet Israel's needs as a Shepherd. But as we have seen, the words were originally spoken by Jacob concerning Joseph; by Moses concerning Joshua; and by Micaiah concerning the kings of Israel and Judah. But it is to David—himself the Shepherd King of Israel—that we owe the first direct use of this beautiful Title for Jehovah. And who but David could most appropriately have given this name to "the Mighty God." Taken by Jehovah Himself "from the sheepfolds" (as we are told in the closing verses of Ps. lxxviii.) "to feed Jacob His people and Israel His inheritance," David was one who (speaking for himself as well as for his people, though he had been appointed the earthly leader of Israel), felt that his only hope of peace and prosperity lay in the fact that he could humbly affirm "The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not

want." This and the 80th Psalm, "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock," are the first two passages in which this beautiful figure occurs in application to the Divine Being, Jehovah. But from this time forward, and notably in the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah, we find this precious Title occurring again and again in reference to the LORD Jehovah; doubtless in every case taking it from "the sweet Psalmist of Israel." But we who possess the New Testament Scriptures are of course permitted—and indeed bound—to picture and personify this glorious Shepherd far more clearly than King David or the Prophets could do. Again and again, in considering the Titles of Jehovah, I feel constrained to remind myself and my readers, that the LORD "Jehovah" is now revealed to us in our LORD Jesus Christ. Of Him let us (without being afraid of the repetition) remind ourselves as frequently as possible that because "He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: therefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every Name—that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 8, 11).

We do no dishonour to God the Father—indeed, we but honour Him more—when we learn rightly to think of Jesus Christ as "Jehovah," because, as He Himself said, He is "One with the Father." But what joy and peace to the soul when we think of Him rightly as "Jehovah Rohi, the LORD my Shepherd!"

Have we ever really considered what it means to call Jesus LORD, and to say of Him, "Jehovah Rohi"? It means that He who was "in the bosom of the Father," from all eternity till the "fulness of time" was come, suddenly left that bosom as the Incarnate Son of God, and came down to earth to be the Lamb—"the Lamb of God," of course, but nevertheless the Lamb, "learning obedience by the things which He suffered;" learning, by taking the place of the sheep, how to meet all their needs and infirmities when they should take Him for "the Great Shepherd." Think of Him before He was "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world": and then think of Him (1) actually "taking on Him the seed of Abraham," that He might know experimentally the true position of the Lamb, in obedience, confidence, and patient submission, towards the Father, as His own Great "Shepherd—Jehovah"; and then (2) "having learned obedience by the things that He suffered," dying as the Lamb of God, and giving

His flesh "for the life of the world," that we might become His sheep and "follow Him whithersoever He goeth" (Rev. xiv. 4).

In everything, while on earth, He acted as the Lamb both before God and before man, in order that He might exhibit all that ought to be found in His own sheep. As the Lamb He gave up His life to God, that He might become the life of man; and "as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth" (Isa. liii. 7), "that by His stripes we might be healed." In connection with this I would say, study carefully 1 Peter ii. 18, 25. Is it true of us all that, though "we were as sheep going astray, we have now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls"? It was as the Lamb that Christ Jesus first appeared among men, and then, because He proved Himself faithful as the Lamb, His Father exalted Him to the position of the Shepherd. It was as the Shepherd that He began His work by dying, for "The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep" (St. John x. 11); and it was as "The Great Shepherd" that He was "brought again from the dead" (Heb. xiii. 20) "by the glory of God the Father" (Rom. vi. 4); while as "The Chief Shepherd" (1 Pet. v. 4) He will come again hereafter to gather and to reward His flock according to their doings. Then will He

inquire whether such of His sheep as have been appointed to act as under-shepherds, have in all things been faithful to their trust, and they shall "receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. v. 2, 4).

It was because He was faithful in the lowly position of the Lamb, that the LORD Jesus Christ has been raised to the position of the Shepherd, and as "The Lord our Shepherd" He sits on the throne of God's glory (1) to be to us all that can be required by poor trembling sheep; (2) to make us follow His wondrous example as the suffering Lamb; and (3) to teach us how, as good under-shepherds, to give up our whole lives to the welfare of others, that we may "bring in the other sheep which are not yet of His flock or fold." Thus shall we not only "follow the Good Shepherd" as "His own sheep"; but at last, like "the Great Shepherd," raised to life eternal, we shall, if faithful to Him that called us, be perfected like "the Chief Shepherd" Himself, and, though, of course, under Him, we shall win our crowns as He won His, through true and self-sacrificing love to mankind.

All this we may find in that gracious "Shepherd of Israel," the true "Stone" (whom "the Mighty God" appointed "to make strong the arms and

hands" even of the despised and rejected "Joseph") (Gen. xlix. 24), if we will but trust the LORD Jesus as "Jehovah Rohi." What find we then in this Title when we apply it to ourselves? Do we realise that it meets our every need? We shall never appreciate it rightly, I suppose, till we have passed through the preliminary stages of our subject; but when we have reached this point in the series of Jehovistic revelations, and begin to frighten ourselves with the thought of difficulties and dangers which we all must face before we reach Home, and realise that we are utterly helpless and provisionless in ourselves, then do we learn that we have but to "look unto Him" (the word that our Redeemer has so graciously uttered for the needy), and at once we find that, as "the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls," He undertakes to guide us wherever He requires us to go, and to supply our every possible need till He has "folded" us safely in glory.

But let us now briefly consider the power of this Title. "The Lord is my Shepherd," says the Psalmist, and immediately adds, "I shall not want." Of course he would not; it was not possible that he should: for if the wonderful Name be true, the mere announcement of the Name implies this result; and the moment we

can claim the first part, the second is a necessity. Once say with holy certainty, "The LORD is my Shepherd," and you need hardly go on, except to reassure yourselves, for if "Jehovah" is your Shepherd, you cannot want. This is theoretically clear to all, because we dare not deny that "Jehovah" is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and in His very Being is Almighty, and Everlasting Love. Yes, men say, but these are abstract qualities; and though we may discuss them and theorise thereon, they do not bring practical power or supplies to the soul. Then add to this wonderful abstract doctrine the facts which we have already brought forth in this address: how this wondrous Being, endowed with the properties of the Godhead, deigned to come down from the Father's throne and take the place of the Lamb, that He might know how to sympathise with all the wants of His sheep; how He died to bring the flock to Himself as their Shepherd, and purchased it with "the price of His own precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. i. 19), that he might show how He loved and cared for His sheep, even though they had "gone astray and turned every one to his own way;" how He lives to think of the flock and to prepare a place for His own sheep when they are made ready

for the eternal Home; how He watches over His flock to give it food, water, and shelter whenever He calls it to pass through the wilderness (though, thank God, He gives but little of the howling wilderness to "His own sheep"); and how He introduces them to the enjoyments of Canaan, which means "the days of heaven upon earth" for them who will spiritually receive it. "Meditate upon these things: give yourselves wholly to them, continue in them" (1 Tim. iv. 15, 16), and assuredly we shall know as never before, the calm, quieting influence, and the all-satisfying power of this beautiful word—"Jehovah Rohi: the LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not want." Then will all else that the sweet Psalmist advances become as vividly sure to our souls as the first verse of the Psalm.

For, in closing, let us ask ourselves, "What *can* we want"? Will any one quietly tell God what he needs, and then see if it is not met by "Jehovah Rohi"? Take the place of a poor sheep, with all its weakness and wants; and then say whether the LORD is not able and willing to supply. Then, when we have challenged and silenced our souls, which dare not deny the power and love of "Jehovah," let us turn to this Psalm (which, of course, comes from David, but which also comes

from a greater than David) and say, Is there anything more that we can possibly think of or desire, than is set before us in the twelve clauses which follow the word "Shepherd"—as the provision made by Jehovah for His sheep? Let us rapidly survey this wondrous revelation of the tender care and loving-kindness of the LORD.

Immediately that we have left the bondage and burdens of Egypt we naturally cry, "I do want rest; for I am so weary after all that the taskmasters of sin laid upon me;" and at once "Jehovah" enables us to say, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."

Then again the cry goes up, "I am so thirsty after all that I have had to bear;" and the answer comes, "He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Again the soul says, "I want restoration, for I have sinned;" and the answer is, "He restoreth my soul."

Then "I want support, for I am so weak"—and "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake."

"I am utterly frightened; I want a guide." Then listen to the believing soul's assurance: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Thank God, it is only the valley of the *shadow*, and a shadow

is not a reality; a shadow has no solidity, no real form, it is but a shadow.

"I am so lonely: but Thou art with me."

"I am so feeble: but Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me."

"I am so hungry, and afraid of my foes: but Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."

"I am so weary and worn with my travels: Thou anointest my head with oil."

"I have nothing wherewith to cheer my own soul or my neighbours: but my cup runneth over."

"I am so faint and halting that I cannot bear up: but goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."

"I want to know what shall befall me hereafter—I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."

Oh! truly one is ashamed, and I hope all who read these words are ashamed, to think that in the past we have so often doubted "Jehovah," and gone forward as cowards, troubled, fretful, and complaining.

Are we alarmed at the thought of enemies hidden in the rocks—"the kopjes in the veldt" of our African desert? Are we expecting to find

foes behind every tree and rock in our journey? They may be there; but "in all these things we are to be more than conquerors through Him that loved us." "Not that we are sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." Can we really ask for anything more? Of course, if a sheep, poor silly thing, will determinedly go browsing at the edge of the precipice and, looking over at a single mouthful of herbage far down, try to descend the rock—and then finds itself hanging, as it were, between life and death, with no hope of deliverance—it cannot lay the blame on "Jehovah Rohi," nor wonder if the journey seem dangerous and trying! Yet all the time the tender Shepherd is looking for His sheep, and somehow—I know not how, but upheld by His Father—He passes even over a precipice to rescue the sheep that He loves, and in His arms He brings it back to the pastures above.

Are we not rightly ashamed at the thought that we could ever have doubted this tender, "restoring" Shepherd; that we could ever have thought that He would not make perfect provision? Shall we not go forth to trust, and to follow hard after Him, for the future?

And a last word—I would recommend for prayerful consideration six thoughts from the tenth chapter

of the Gospel of St. John, which will show what the sheep *ought* to do for such a Shepherd. His sheep hear His voice, they know Him, they obey Him, they come to Him, they trust Him, and they follow Him. The LORD in His mercy grant that, having heard even a little (however familiar the words may be) concerning the tender care and the wondrous love of Him Whom we are permitted to call "Jehovah Rohi, or the LORD my Shepherd," we may go forward determined henceforth to obey in all things Him Who "loved us and gave Himself for us," and Who is ever ready to bless us "above all we ask, or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. iii. 20).

VIII

"JEHOVAH TSIDKENU: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS"

"And this is His Name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."—JEREMIAH xxiii. 6.

"JEHOVAH TSIDKÉNU, the LORD our Righteousness:" what a glorious name for poor sinners to utter, as descriptive of Him against Whom they have sinned. It is mentioned again, as will doubtless be remembered, in chap. xxxiii. 16; but there it is described as the future name of Jerusalem. It will assist us if we briefly compare the two passages, and notice the striking similarity, and the necessary differences, between them. Read first the passage from which our text is taken—chap. xxiii. 5, 6—"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His Name whereby He shall be called, THE

LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Then turn to chap. xxxiii. v. 15, 16, and notice how, to the careless reader, the two promises might appear to be one and the same: "In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and justice in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the Name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our Righteousness." But observe that in the one case we are told of "the Name whereby *He* shall be called"; in the other of "the Name whereby *she* shall be called." In the one case the prophecy is concerning "the Branch of Jehovah," in the other it is concerning "Jerusalem," and yet the same Name is to be given to each of them;—distinctly indicating, when we bring the two passages into connection, that what the LORD Jehovah is in Himself, He proposes to make His beloved people on earth.

Surely this is a very wonderful truth; and great indeed appears the privilege of those who are called to stand for a while and ponder thereon, till we, at least in some degree, learn the meaning of this Title of Jehovah, and also see in what way, and by what means, it can possibly be made applicable both to Him and to ourselves. And,

once again, I may be permitted to appeal to the reader's instinct of admiration for the way in which, in the cycle of the Holy Ghost's teaching concerning the Titles of Jehovah, we find this one brought before us exactly in the order that we should instinctively desire, and at the very point where we shall specially need it.

"Jehovah Tsidkenu," says one learned writer, "may rightly be paraphrased thus: 'The Lord is the Author of our prosperity; or, more strictly, of the justification of our claims in the sight of our enemies.'" A remarkable description, and one to be taken home to our souls. And in order that this may be better understood, I need only quote five connecting passages of Scripture from the Prophet Isaiah in which the truth of this paraphrase is very strikingly exhibited. Isaiah xlv. 24, 25, "Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength; even to Him shall men come; and all that are incensed against Him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory;" Isaiah l. 8, 9, "He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. Behold the LORD God will help me!" Isaiah liv. 17, "No weapon that is formed

against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD; and their righteousness is of Me, saith the LORD;" Isaiah lviii. 8, "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rere-ward;" and Isaiah lxii. 1, 2, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a light that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name," even "Jehovah Tsidkenu, the LORD our Righteousness"; and this, of His infinite mercy, must mean that the creature shall be endowed with the righteousness of the LORD.

Such then is the chain of truth which, from God's own Word, opens out to us something of the depth and force of the expression, "Jehovah Tsidkenu, the LORD our Righteousness." And at what particular point in our spiritual experience shall we be most likely to realise the want of such a provision as this? We have ventured to speak

of Jehovah as our Lifegiver, our Atonement, our Healer, our Banner, our Sanctifier, our Peace, and our Shepherd. And if any thoughtful man were asked at what point in his own spiritual career he had felt a real longing for "The LORD our Righteousness," would it not be exactly at the point which we have now reached in our study? For, starting forth as poor sheep on the wilderness journey, we are not only conscious of our weakness and inability to provide for our wants; but as *spiritual* sheep we must be conscious also of our utter vileness and unworthiness in the LORD'S sight: and we have nothing to offer Him but what Isaiah describes as "filthy rags"; and what St Paul goes so far as to speak of as "refuse" (Phil. iii. 8, R.V.). We have neither character nor conduct of our own to lay before God, though we know that His demand upon us is for absolute righteousness, and with this alone can we stand before those who will accuse us. In the face of the law's demands we all of us acknowledge that we are not only "miserable sinners," but helpless for the future. Atonement was for the past; but who shall give us righteousness whereby we may be found pleasing and acceptable to God? The answer is given in this wonderful revelation "Jehovah Tsidkenu," and it is given exactly at

the point where, if wise, we should have asked for it, for it is exactly here that we really require it; and here let us gratefully dwell together on the wonderful provision with which Jehovah "satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Ps. cvii. 9).

In dealing with the Titles of Jehovah, the preacher's object is to show that the Lord's redeemed are, in Him, provided with everything that they can rightly be said to need or desire. Every real "want" He meets by His magnificent Name; every right desire, He tells us, we shall find satisfied in His holiness and power. And what we are now invited to realise is, that in the face of our unworthiness and inability in reference to uprightness and holiness, the LORD GOD has, by His name of "Jehovah Tsidkenu," made full and perfect provision for all who will accept it. How, then, does the LORD so become our righteousness that we may be "made the righteousness of God in Him"? Now we must not forget that there are other attributes of "Jehovah" besides those which we have hitherto been considering. Doubtless it will have struck many that hitherto we have dwelt only on those characteristics, or Titles, which display Him to the creature as gracious and merciful, and full of tender pity and compassion; and

as One Whose whole purpose was to meet the needs of man in his utter helplessness and weakness as a sinner; and it might be thought by some (and rightly thought) that if we dwell only on this one side of the nature and attributes of Jehovah, we should have purposely avoided some of the most magnificent features of His character. For while love and pity are indeed glorious attributes, especially when exhibited towards those who are under the power of sin, yet God must also, of course, be absolutely perfect in regard to the attributes of justice and holiness; and it is utterly impossible that the all-holy and righteous God should simply show Himself merciful and gracious to sinners, or that the creature who is intended "to enjoy God for ever" should be content with a God of mere tenderness and pity. A man who wishes to help a drunkard, may show a sense of pity towards him; but he does not necessarily touch the character of the one who has fallen, nor does he necessarily exhibit the noble qualities of sobriety in himself. Hence neither the deliverer (from justice) nor the delivered, may have the slightest real interest in each other for the future. What is wanted between Saviour and saved, is similarity of character. So God must change the character of him who is a sinner,

before man can be satisfied with God, or God satisfied with man; and though it is beautiful for the sinner to hear of The Atoner, The Healer, The Banner, and the Sanctifier; and while it is blessed to speak of Jehovah as our Peace, and our Shepherd; yet, if man is not in himself made absolutely righteous, he could never be eternally satisfied in God; and if God did not require absolute righteousness in man, He Himself could never be satisfied in His creatures, for God has necessarily revealed Himself as the absolutely Righteous One.

And in righteousness we include two attributes —justice and holiness; "Justice" which will require absolute repayment for everything done in contravention of law, and which will also enable the offender to stand in the face of all enemies, however severe their attack; and "Holiness," which means the display of uprightness and goodness of character, with power to stand against all temptation. These things man must possess and exhibit, if he is to appear in the presence of God, as actually fitted to company with the Holy One. Now it is just this which is offered to us in "Jehovah Tsidkenu," and which, at least partially, we may realise and enjoy, as we go on our journey with the Saviour, Who has already made Himself known to us as The Atoner, The Healer, The

Banner, The Sanctifier, The Peacegiver, and The Shepherd.

And is it not a beautiful thought for us who are perhaps bemoaning our weakness and vileness, that it was Jeremiah—the prophet of evil, the man who was always crying woe to the guilty—who was commissioned to give to the people whom he condemned so vigorously, this glorious Title of "The LORD our Righteousness"; and just at the point where the prophet had been most solemnly exhibiting the judgments of God upon those who had sinned, and the special attribute of God as "the Holy One," who cannot in any sense "away with iniquity." Very remarkable, surely, that just when the creature has been convinced that his case is an utterly hopeless one, and that he is destitute of any personal provision for his spiritual needs, the prophet should be bidden to bring before the sinful worm of the earth this glorious truth, that the LORD has undertaken to provide what man could never create, or find, for himself, viz., an absolute and everlasting Righteousness, and that this Righteousness shall not only be imputed, but imparted, to God's chosen ones. "In those days," when God has dealt with them as sinners, when His vengeance has been completely satisfied and His justice met, by the substitu-

tionary work of the Christ, He will be prepared to exhibit the wondrous powers of Love: and as He says in Jer. xxxi. 3, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee;" so when He begins the grace-work of drawing to Himself, He says: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His Name whereby He shall be called, 'Jehovah Tsidkenu, the LORD our Righteousness.'"

Now, seeing that this revelation is made by our God at the very point at which the need of righteousness would be realised most strongly, it is clearly our duty to ask how far we may take the promise to ourselves. And the answer is, that whatever is true for Israel nationally or ecclesiastically, may be taken as true, in a spiritual sense, for the soul of each individual who realises his own personal requirements; and if this remarkable revelation was meant to express what the LORD's favoured people, Israel, should afterwards enjoy as a nation, the same is now true in the deepest spiritual sense to every one that "names the

Name of Christ, and desires to depart from iniquity."

But further, when we speak of the King who is to act as "the righteous Branch," we need only remind ourselves that we are speaking of the LORD Jesus Christ, and that all who accept His salvation may affirm of Him, that *He* is "The LORD our Righteousness." Socinus, the great heretic of the sixteenth century, said that this passage could not possibly apply to Jesus Christ in any way whatever, because the Title is only used by the prophet in the same way that a Banner and an Altar were called "Jehovah Nissi," and "Jehovah Shalom," and as altars and banners were only things *connected* with Jehovah's work for His people, and not Jehovah Himself, so this promise does not make the Person spoken of to be really Jehovah; nor is He to be thought of as Jehovah, but as a Person *connected* with Jehovah's righteousness in some minor degree. Hence we are to think of the "Righteous Branch" as a mere natural son of David. I would refer those who wish to see a complete refutation of this error, to Pearson, "On the Creed," page 266 and onwards of the fifth chapter (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1864), in which, with his usual ability, he quietly disproves the whole heresy, and proves (1) that

the Righteous Branch must be the LORD Jesus Christ, and (2) that, without any question whatever, it is our blessed Saviour Jesus, Who is set before us as "Jehovah Tsidkenu."

If, therefore, we are justified in taking spiritually everything given to Israel nationally, and if we are safe in affirming of this beautiful expression that it does refer to our LORD Jesus Christ, and if we are not ashamed to acknowledge Him as "God of God, and very God of very God," we may lay all Socinian heresies on one side, and may profitably turn to consider the question—How our LORD Jesus Christ has become "Jehovah Tsidkenu, the LORD our Righteousness"? And in attempting to answer this question, it will, I think, be profitable to notice that, wherever this subject is brought before us, it is connected with the Branch, the Branch of righteousness, and it will require careful study of the expression, "The Branch," if we would know what is meant by the Title "Jehovah Tsidkenu."

We shall remember how, in the 4th and 11th chapters of Isaiah, and again in the 3rd and 6th chapters of Zechariah, as also in these two passages of Jeremiah, the expression, "The Branch," occurs again and again, and that in all of them the LORD promises to set forth

His Branch, as the true source of life and power for His people. In the 11th of Isaiah, where The Branch is described as springing forth "from the roots of Jesse," another word is found in the original, viz., "Netzer," which means "a layer-shoot" or "sucker." It is this word which is the origin or foundation of the name Nazareth, the place from which the LORD Jesus came; and by this word He is depicted as the "Netzer," or layer-shoot for His people. Where He is called the Branch of the Tree of Life, He is clearly assumed to be One with the great God Himself; while from Him the smaller branches hang and derive their life. But when He is called "the layer-shoot," it is to show the lowliness of His human origin, and how through death and burial He was actually *laid* in the grave; but after being buried and taking root downward, the LORD God caused Him to spring upward that He might become "a Plant of renown," and so He grew and spread till, from the stem of David, there arose that wondrous Tree of Life of which we read in the Revelation. Jesus Christ also says, "I am the true vine, ye are the branches;" for each of us may be so engrafted into this Vine by faith, that we become partakers of His very life. If, therefore, we think of Him as the

Parent Stem, then His life shall so pass into us that whatsoever Jesus Christ is we may (in our measure) become; and if we think of Him as "The Branch," on the parent stem of the Godhead, then whatever of the Godhead passes into Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Ghost, the same may (according to our capacity and faith) pass into every one of us. Hence it is that St. Paul can so unceasingly speak of Jesus Christ as "our Life," and can say in 1 Corinthians i. 30, "Of Him (*i.e.* God) are ye in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Some commentators think that "wisdom" is the real subject of this passage, even as it is of the verses that precede (i. 20, &c.), and that the Apostle, in summing up his argument as to "Christ the wisdom of God," sets Him forth as the provision of God for us sinners, in the threefold form of "righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." But in whatever way we punctuate or render this verse, it clearly suffices to prove that Jesus Christ is made of God unto us "Jehovah Tsidkenu, the LORD our Righteousness." Therefore the moment the soul is engrafted into the layer-shoot of the stem of David, we become partakers of His death and burial, so as to have done with the old life; and

"having put off the old man which is corrupt" and left him in the grave, we rise to the life immortal, which is the resurrection life of Christ, and become "partakers of the Divine nature" (2 Pet. i. 4). Henceforth then, says St. Paul, it is "not I that live, but Christ Which liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20).

See we then what it is to say that we are "believers in the LORD Jesus Christ"? Once claim for ourselves this glorious position, and we ought to know and be sure that, because as "The righteous Branch" (or "The Branch of Righteousness," as it is in Jer. xxxiii. 15) He has been provided by God for us, He becomes to us whatever He is Himself. But He is the very righteousness of God, for He is Jehovah Himself, and this is one of His absolute prerogatives. Hence St. Paul can say, in 2 Corinthians v. 21, "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

"I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God"—let us claim our full privileges, if we see the Divine provision. It suffices not that we be cleansed by the precious blood of the Lamb, or that substitution is given through the revelation

of "Jehovah Jireh." That much we learned at Mount Moriah; but it was only the starting-point of God's provision for poor helpless sinners when, by the sacrifice of the LORD Jesus, "the sin of the world was taken away." It suffices not that we can look to "Jehovah Rophi," the LORD our Healer, and "thanking God may take courage" from that; or to "Jehovah Nissi," as the banner against all our enemies; or that we may come to the altar of "Shalom" and talk of Jehovah as "our Peace"; or that we have a "Good Shepherd," who will meet all our natural wants. We still need something more than this: we want power to stand in the face of our accusers—come Law, come Justice, come Devils, come Conscience—and as they encamp against us in phalanxes, and lay to our charge even things that we know not, as well as all the horrible things that we know, we want power to meet them as men who are perfectly righteous, and this we can do if we are "made the righteousness of God in Christ." Remember that "He suffered, the Just for the unjust"; not merely as the everlasting "I am" of love, pity, and goodness, but also as "the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," Who is the Creator, Ruler, and Judge of all mankind, Who expects the creature to be able to face His

perfect Justice and Holiness, and to meet Justice and Holiness without one shadow of fear, because he knows that he is righteous with the very Righteousness of Jehovah.

There is an incident upon which I love to dwell, and which illustrates beautifully what I am now seeking to enforce, viz., that we must learn to rejoice in the Righteousness of God, and not merely in His pity. A girl of twelve lay dying, and her mother said—"Are you afraid, my darling, to go and meet God?" "Oh no," she replied, "I am not afraid, I look to the justice of God to take me to heaven." The mother thought her child must be wandering, so she said, "My darling, you mean His pity, His love." "No, mother," she said, "I mean His justice; He must take me to heaven, because Christ is my righteousness, and I claim Him as my own; I am as He is now in God's sight, and God would never reject His own child."

But there is more even than this; for if the LORD Jehovah be indeed my Righteousness, then He communicates to me that second great attribute, namely, Holiness, the Holiness of God's own perfect Son; and as the LORD Jesus becomes "the righteousness of God" for every one who will take Him, He passes into the receiver more and more

of His own character; that is—"the gift of God" in Christ is not merely substitutionary, propitiatory, or what is called forensic; but the blessed experience of the Divine life permeating our own —His character and conduct being exemplified in our own, by the power of the Holy Ghost; for the Lord Jesus, when He comes to us as "Jehovah Tsidkenu," passes His life, His being, into our souls, and as far as our being is submitted to Him, we are "all one in Christ Jesus," and one with Him in life.

Here, of course, faith comes in, because every man has, at each separate moment, the power of believing, or disbelieving, God's Word. Moreover, he has the power of exercising his will, and just so far as the will co-operates with faith, and the man submits his will to God's, Christ's Spirit takes possession of him and makes him what the LORD Jesus is. Thus St. Paul tells us, in 2 Corinthians iii. 18, that "we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the LORD;" and in verse 17 he tells us that "the LORD is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Hence we may notice that in these two short verses he makes both Jesus

Christ and the Spirit to be LORD, *i.e.* Jehovah. Does any man say, "I am longing for holiness as I once longed for pardon and peace"? Then take it by taking Jesus Christ into your life; for He waits at the door of your soul to be in your own personal experience "Jehovah Tsidkenu," the LORD *your* Righteousness, to make you what He is, and to "fulfil all the good pleasure of His will" in your life, character, and conduct. We have no right any longer to moan and to say—I am a slave to an infirmity, a habit I cannot overcome. *You cannot,* but *He can,* and "the things that are impossible with man are possible with God"; for He has given Jesus Christ to be to us "the true wisdom of God—even righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Is Christ our life? Then let the life be lived out. But, of course, "without faith it is impossible to please God."

What then is the life which men, so richly endowed as we are, should be living for the future? First, a life of still, unbroken calm before God. This is expecting much, when we remember our own vileness: yet this is the first assured blessing, or the starting-point of spiritual enjoyment, offered to all who will receive it, in and through "Jehovah Tsidkenu"; for surely the

highest form of enjoyment or comfort that can be implanted in the human heart, will be secured to the man who *knows* that he has been made the very righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, the LORD. How can we be in terror of the judgment of God, though it proceed with all the justice of the Holy One? We stand complete in Christ Jesus, and are therefore as righteous as our Judge. How can we be otherwise than calm—no matter what may betide—when we can speak confidently of Jehovah as our life? It is to "resist the Holy Ghost," it is to "grieve the Holy Spirit of God whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption," to say that we are afraid either of God, or of devils, when once we know that Christ Jesus is our absolute righteousness, not only in the sight of God as our judicial substitute or Saviour; but also in every department and duty of our daily existence on earth.

Secondly, there must be a life of perfect purpose as to righteousness, if the soul is right with God. We know well that perfection can never be attained upon earth; but we know that the provision is in Christ, and the purpose should be in us. Hence we would say that there is something utterly wrong if the aim, the prayer, and the expectation, of every one of us is not that we

may "serve God in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life." We claim to have a perfect righteousness, judicially; but what do we know of the power experimentally? If we take all that may be received by faith, the realisation will come exactly in proportion to our apprehension of "The LORD our Righteousness."

Thus, thirdly and lastly, there will be the progressive enjoyment of the gifts, of which St. Paul speaks to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xii.–xiv.) as well as of the gift of salvation, which is given perfect in Christ Jesus. Having grace to receive grace, we shall daily experience the blessed truth and power of Christ's words to St. Paul: "My grace is" (not shall be in another world, but is now, in the ever present moment) "sufficient for thee," and more and more shall we be conformed to His holy pattern; so that Christ becomes (1) our Peace, even perfect Peace, as our Righteousness before God; (2) our Pattern, even a perfect Pattern for our holy life upon earth; and (3) our Power to glorify God and to win others to the Saviour, exactly in proportion as we receive Him through faith, and "yield ourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and our members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

IX

"JEHOVAH SHAMMAH: THE LORD IS THERE."

"And the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there."—EZEKIEL xlviii. 35.

"JEHOVAH SHAMMAH," thus closes the vision; and that word "vision" has for us a twofold sense or application. First, it applies to the faithful prophet of the captivity, whose whole heart was yearning towards his beloved people Israel in the hope that the mighty God would speedily fulfil His promise, and restore them to their native land and to the Holy City of Jerusalem; and one can imagine how Ezekiel, if he realised in any degree the magnificent prospects which "the Holy Ghost had moved him" to set forth, must, when he came to this striking revelation of "Jehovah Shammah," have felt within his soul an ineffable joy, which would make him cry as the aged Simeon long afterwards cried, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." But the word "vision" has another application for us, who have so long been engaged

with the Revelations of God concerning His incomprehensible Name of "Jehovah." He has permitted us to dwell, however feebly and unworthily, on *some* of the Titles connected with that wondrous Name, and to consider the different place and meaning which each title bears in the different parts of God's Holy Word. The close of that solemn vision is reached in the last words of Ezekiel, "Jehovah Shammah, the LORD is there;" and once again we can hardly fail to observe the peculiar fitness with which the revelation of Jehovah's character, work, and relation to man, closes with this most striking expression. What more could be desired for the completion of bliss than that the wonderful Being, Whose different names we have been considering, should deign to fulfil to each of us these remarkable words, "Jehovah Shammah, the LORD is there," graciously applying them to every part of our being? They sum up all blessedness, and well and rightly do they convey the closing instruction of the Holy Ghost upon the Titles of Jehovah.

We have seen how by type, shadow, symbol, direct utterance, and historical events, the LORD GOD has been pleased in the days gone by to make known Himself to the sons of men; and more peculiarly how He has brought before us

His own character and power as "JEHOVAH ELOHIM," the LORD GOD, with all the wonderful fulness connected with that incomprehensible Name; and we have doubtless (may I at least speak for the Preacher?) realised, as it never entered into our hearts before, that while the title "Elohim," which reveals to us the Creator, Ruler, Preserver, and Judge, is known to the whole universe more or less, and everything that exists may be said to be under the power of "Elohim," it would seem (and I hope there is nothing irreverent in the thought) that in the title "Jehovah"—under which God reveals Himself to His intelligent creatures as the Everlasting, Self-existent "I AM," Who brings an eternity of blessing, grace, love, mercy, and provision, according to the peculiar needs—the larger proportion of God's creation can have but very little sympathy or enjoyment in comparison with man! Do you ask—Why? The answer is clear at once to all who have realised, through our study, how peculiarly this Title refers to man, and to man in his fallen and helpless condition as a sinner. For it brings before us One Who, at inconceivable cost to Himself, has been led to make full provision for the creature who has ruined himself by sin. And thank God, a large proportion of God's creatures had no part in man's

sin, though the whole earthly creation has had to suffer in sympathy with man. Now, if sympathy requires that there must be something akin between him who shows it and him to whom sympathy is shown, then there must of necessity be in the Titles of "Jehovah" (which depict His nature, character, and words), something that expresses true affinity with the creature by whom these Titles are to be appreciated. And with whom, among all the creatures of the universe, can the Titles of Jehovah be even supposed to express such perfect sympathy, as with the sons of Adam since their fall? As each separate Title has been unfolded, we have, I trust, been enabled to learn more and more of Jehovah's boundless sympathy with man.

We have seen, under the Title of "Jehovah Jireh," how provision was made by sacrifice, for the sin of the creature to be altogether put away; and who can appreciate this like the children of Adam? We have thought of the LORD God as "Jehovah the Healer"; and who among the angels can appreciate this Title as we can? (See the words of the Apostle in 1 Peter i. 12.) We have thought of Him as "Jehovah Nissi—the LORD our Banner"; and who can know or appreciate their God as the Provider of all that is needed in the hour of battle,

like the children of men who have to fight so unceasingly "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"? (Eph. vi. 12). In short, as we take the Titles of Jehovah and ponder them one after the other, we shall be driven, I think, to this conclusion, that only Man can rightly and duly appreciate the magnificent revelation conveyed by the Name and Titles of Jehovah. Whose debt, then, so great, as the debt which *man* owes to his God, and which he can only attempt to repay by tokens of gratitude alone? And when we come, as we do now, to the climax, or final stage of the revelation, I know not how any of the angels, or principalities, or powers in heavenly places can, in any sense, compare with ourselves in the right appreciation of these wonderful words, "Jehovah Shammah, the LORD is there." The expression is used, as you will observe, of a temple and a city, both of which have been created upon earth for the glory of God and the welfare of man; and the whole picture is set forth to convey this great truth to our minds, viz., that wherever the LORD sees a true fitness in the earthly habitation, He is prepared, in His infinite love and mercy, to come and make His abode therein and to go no

more out. Henceforth He will reveal Himself in that city and temple as "Jehovah," the everlasting "I am," who will abide there for evermore! So complete and enduring shall be this inhabitation, that the true blessedness of the city can only be expressed by the Name or Title "The LORD is there."

Now, remembering that we have undertaken this study of the Titles of Jehovah solely on spiritual grounds, or for purposes of edification, it will hardly be expected that I should enter into a discussion of the many difficult renderings or explanations that have been given of the marvellous visions of Ezekiel, and more particularly of the temple and city described in chap. xliii. and onwards. Probably most of my readers are aware that among the orthodox Jews it has received a strictly literal interpretation, and that they hold, as one of their chief consolations in exile, that when the LORD'S time comes, they will be taken back to Jerusalem, and will build both the temple and city as here depicted, and that when the temple is built, and the daily sacrifice has been commenced, then suddenly Messiah will come and take His position as "the Prince in their midst," and will reign over them as the true and Eternal Son of David, making the restored city and

temple to be the centre of His rule over the earth; and that then, for Israel's everlasting benefit and delight, the words of our text will be fulfilled, "Jehovah Shammah, the LORD is there."

On the other hand, Christians have been greatly divided as to the way in which they should understand this remarkable vision: some, not many, holding to a strictly literal interpretation, and refusing to see any deep spiritual signification therein; others, again, taking it typically and spiritually, and holding that this, and this only, can be the purport of the vision. There are some, however, and they among the most deeply learned and spiritual of the commentators—who hold that we must combine the two; and that while the vision may be taken in a strictly literal sense in regard to the restoration of Israel to their land, and to the fact that they shall build the city and the temple and worship God there, and that The Messiah, The Prince, shall appear for their salvation, it is also to be taken in a spiritual sense, and as having a deeply important application to ourselves; while in a third sense it has an eternal and everlasting application (as I believe all prophetic Scriptures have) to the day when Christ's kingdom shall be fully established on the earth.

I do not propose to dwell on the strictly literal interpretation, though, from long and earnest study of Scripture, I confidently believe that all Israelitish prophecies will have their literal fulfilment in the future history of that People. Indeed, I cannot understand the meaning of "inspiration" or of "God's Word" if I am not to believe that Israel will return to their own land, rebuild their temple, and resume sacrificial worship there; and that the LORD Jesus Christ, as the promised Messiah, shall come as the Prince, or King, of Israel, to reign over them in a special sense, as His chosen People—constituting them, in His millenial reign, "the chief of the nations" among the unglorified inhabitants of the earth. But behind the literal, as always, there lies in this vision the deep spiritual interpretation, which has a peculiar reference to ourselves, and to this I would now turn, as revealing the climax of personal blessing set forth for our enjoyment in the different Titles of Jehovah.

What then, for ourselves, during our pilgrimage on earth, will be the force of this particular expression, "Jehovah Shammah, the LORD is there"? Can we take from it any real help for the journey of life? Can we say that it brings any comfort and blessing to us now? Assuredly, if we have

in any sense appreciated the Titles connected with the Name "Jehovah," which we have hitherto been considering, and have seen how they bring peace, protection, blessing, power—we can ill afford, indeed, we may say, we can on no account afford, to relinquish the blessings conveyed by this expression: for it is the consummation of the whole to say, "Jehovah Shammah, the LORD is there." Are not we who live under the New Testament Dispensation, described as the very City and Temple of the living God? Is it not true concerning the Church of Christ as a whole, that if there is to be found anywhere, in the present day, the antetype of the Old Testament Tabernacle, and the antetype of the Temple in Jerusalem, it is to be found in the saints of the living God, who constitute the Church of Christ upon earth? What Christian man could for a moment admit that no interpretation but the literal, may be given to the Old Testament expression, "The city and temple of God"? Look for instance at Psalm xlvi. 4: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." Can we allow that to be taken simply or literally of Jerusalem, and not claim our own spiritual share therein? Look, again, at Psalm xlviii. 1—"Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God,

in the mountain of His holiness," and say whether such words apply only to the old capital of King David? Look once more at Psalm lxxxvii., where we have a passage which every one of us would, I suppose, seek to apply in a spiritual sense; yet in the 3rd verse we read: "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God;" and surely that city must have a spiritual meaning as well as the rest of the picture? Take once more Psalm ci. (that we may see how this particular expression occurs again and again in this most spiritual portion of the Bible), which we all of us feel is to be appropriated specially to ourselves, and there we read: "I will early destroy all the wicked of the land, that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD." Surely this means for us something more than Jerusalem?

I need only refer further to the passage in Isaiah lx. 14, where we have that wondrous revelation that was given to the prophet concerning the restoration of Zion and the glory that awaits her, when the LORD shall come to give her His blessing. There we read, "They shall call thee, The city of the LORD, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel;" and can we afford, even though we believe in a future literal fulfilment, to let that wondrous vision be given to the Jew alone? Surely the

Church of Jesus Christ has ever claimed—and with full justification—that she is, in the deepest spiritual sense, the city of the living God. To prove this we need only, I hope, quote one passage from the New Testament—Heb. xii. 22: "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God." Can we afford to let these words be taken only in an historical sense? No, we say, God forbid; and right sure we are that there is another, and that a deep spiritual, sense in which the word "city" is used in God's Word, and that sense is to be found to-day in the Church of the LORD Jesus Christ.

But, again, we must apply the same thoughts to "the Temple"; for not only do we find in this vision of Ezekiel the description of the temple within the city, but there is in the Church of the LORD Jesus Christ also the true sanctum or shrine, which is to be rightly spoken of as the temple of the LORD. We have the direct declaration of St. Paul on this point: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. iii. 16). Again, in the 6th chapter of the same Epistle and the 19th and 20th verses, "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

And so throughout the whole of the New Testament, notably, for instance, at the close of Ephesians ii., in the 21st and 22nd verses, the Apostle describes us as being "a habitation of God," "a house of God," and a house made for God to inhabit, as His "Temple," by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost: "In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In Whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Let us claim our rights, then: and see if there may not be in our spiritual experience, another marvellous fulfilment of what was given to the prophet as a vision, in the Old Testament time. Let us endeavour, in all simplicity, to appropriate the fact, that we ourselves are meant to be that inner sanctum, or temple, in which God proposes to dwell, and of which it is to be said, "Jehovah Shammah, the LORD is there." And let us realise, as we seek to apprehend this blessed truth, that there is not one member of His Body, not a single part of His House, not one iota of His Holy Temple, but ought to speak of His glory. "Every whit of it" (says the Psalmist) "uttereth His glory" (Ps. xxix. 9, margin). Do we ask, How? and Why? The

reason is clear; because "the glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former"(Haggai ii. 9). The glory of the Tabernacle was great, because the Shekinah was there; the glory of Solomon's Temple was greater, because "the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's house" (2 Chron. vii. 2); and the glory of the latter material House was still greater, because the LORD Jesus Christ was pleased to walk within its courts, and to say that it was "His Father's house." Moreover, He came to claim it for His Father, and to give it back to God from the "thieves" who had made it their "den."

But after all there is for us, as the true "Latter House," a glory (in the deep spiritual sense of that word) which far transcends all that has gone before; for every whit of each member of the true Church of Christ, ought to be showing forth the majesty and glory, the beauty and power of the LORD, because He deigns to inhabit us, and to make us "partakers of the Divine nature." Manifestly there should be something infinitely nobler in a living, reasonable, immortal, soul inhabited by the living God, than in a mere inanimate building of brick or stone — however beautiful — in which the cloud of Jehovah's glory might rest, but which must ever remain cold and lifeless in itself. But if this be

so, see what we have a right to claim; viz., that our "God should be in us of a truth"; and that, being in us of a truth, He should be pleased to reveal Himself in, and to, us as "Jehovah," the Omnipresent, the Omniscient, the LORD, Who is ever able and willing to meet every possible need that can arise, as well as to bring every possible joy and delight to His creatures whom He deigns to come and inhabit. But no sooner do we take up the thought that "the LORD Whom we seek has come to His temple," than we remember such words as these: "the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor. iii. 17). Then there must not be one atom of our being, not one particle of our property, not one thought of our heart, not one moment of our time, that is not stamped with the label—"Holiness to the LORD." It is to be "in all manner of conversation," says St. Peter, because it is written, "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet. i. 16).

Again, there should be perfect liberty, for "where the Spirit of the LORD is, there is liberty;" and "we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord," that we may "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ the LORD, Christ

the 'Jehovah,' makes us free." If "Holiness to the LORD" be written upon all that we are, perfect liberty will of necessity ensue, because Christ is our LORD, and He hath made us free.

Once again, there should be perfect freedom from fear; for the same Jehovah that once spoke to Abraham, the "father of the faithful," is also speaking to all his children—and what does he say? "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward;" therefore, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea! I will help thee; yea! I will uphold thee with the right hand of My Righteousness." Henceforth, therefore, there should be no terror, no cowardly alarm, but we should walk in perfect peace, because the LORD passes His own peace to all whom He inhabits; and it is our glorious privilege to say of our souls, "Jehovah Shammah, the LORD is there."

But, once more, the same gracious LORD appears before Abraham and says, "I am the Almighty God: walk before Me: and be thou perfect;" and to Abraham's children the same command comes as an enabling if we rightly appreciate "Jehovah Shammah," for "I can do all things through (or in) Christ Which strengtheneth me."

We might multiply these revelations from

God by which, as "Jehovah," He speaks to those whom He deigns to inhabit; but let it suffice to say that, from the moment we claim to belong to the LORD, the LORD in His might and majesty belongs also to us: therefore every possible need is supplied; for every possible want is met by the all-sufficient grace of Jehovah; and that LORD is our LORD, because that LORD is in us: and, by the mercy of God, we may every one of us say, "Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

But we have still to remind ourselves that behind all this which constitutes a full provision for the life that now is, there lies the tremendous thought of the eternal, of the "everlasting," beyond the grave; and as we think of the time when our mortal life of probation shall have completely run its course, what are we able to say concerning the future? Let any man ask himself what he thinks will constitute the real blessedness of the everlasting state beyond this present existence? and also ask himself, what security will there be for any son of Adam, that he will not fall again as our first parents fell in the garden of Eden? And if these two questions

are solemnly faced, they will assuredly show the marvellous beauty of this expression: "And the name of the city from that day shall be, THE LORD IS THERE." For, when we look into the unknown future, what see we? I suppose none of us have been able to read, unmoved, that wonderful revelation in the 21st chapter of the Apocalypse, in which we are told that the seer was permitted to behold "the coming down from heaven of that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, having *the* glory of *the* God" (as the Greek is): and this city of the New Jerusalem—"the Holy City out of heaven from God"—what is it but the Bride of the Lamb, the Church of the living God, now perfected and glorified, and made fit for the Bridegroom who shall come and take her to Himself—"prepared as a Bride, adorned for her Husband." But what constitutes the peculiar glory of the city which represents the Church in her everlasting state of perfection? It is given in vers. 22–24: "I saw no temple therein: for the LORD God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the

kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it." Yes! this is the joy and security of the Church in eternity, that "Jehovah Shammah, the LORD is there." She cannot fall, because she is inhabited by the LORD God Almighty, the great "Jehovah ELOHIM." Who can fail to be attracted by this revelation of everlasting security and peace for "the Bride of the Lamb"?

And what, we would once again ask, will constitute the perfection of our joy in that unspeakable blessedness that awaits the glorified Church? The answer is that, within the holy city, which means the whole body of the Redeemed, "Jehovah Shammah" shall at last be truly realised and fulfilled. May that joy be yours, and mine, when the Church of the living God shall be brought into eternal union with the Lamb Christ Jesus.

But the Church of Christ is composed of many "members in particular," and "Jehovah Shammah, the LORD is there," is a blessing to be realised by each separate member as his own spiritual experience while upon earth, as well as the one great joy to which we look forward collectively when, through "Jehovah Jireh," "Jehovah Rophi," and all the other blessed gifts involved in the LORD's Name, the whole Church has been prepared as the Bride of the Lamb. Individually we must be,

"as lively stones, built up into a spiritual house" (1 Pet. ii. 5), if we are to have our place in that holy City which is to constitute for ever the Temple of the great God, in which He shall reveal Himself as "Jehovah ELOHIM," even more gloriously than He did at first to Adam and Eve in their innocency. They could hold communion with God while pure and in a state of probation, but God will indwell the Church evermore when she is perfected in glory.

And, once more, let us repeat the inquiry, what is it that guarantees the certainty of our never falling again under the power of Satan? Ofttimes we must have heard the difficulty raised that, if Adam fell from his original perfection in Eden, there seems no reason why the redeemed should be kept from falling into sin, even though they have been taken to be with God in His glory. The all-sufficient answer is found in this—"Jehovah Shammah." This it is that will constitute the all-preserving protection for those who are counted worthy of the resurrection to glory. In the days of man's innocency God visited Eden to talk with His creatures and to take account of His work, but was not living in man as "Jehovah Shammah." But though the LORD God came to visit and hold fellowship with our first parents,

while He judged of their actions, and of their use of the prerogatives bestowed on them as "Man" (see Ps. viii.), the Godhead was altogether external to themselves; and the Visitor was One Who, while He came as a Friend, yet always was to them "Jehovah Elohim," their Judge, or a God to Whom they must give account, as One separate from themselves.

But now, our God is no longer external to ourselves if we are truly Christ's redeemed. He is no longer separate from us either as creatures or sinners, nor is He One to Whom with fear and trembling we have to answer as a Judge. Our God is Jehovah, Who has revealed Himself to us, even on earth, as "Jehovah Shammah," *i.e.* the LORD who deigns to indwell the believer; and Who, taking possession of all that we yield to Him now, will, in the days of our final perfection, be not only absolute Master, but the Life itself, and the empowerer of every faculty of our being. That is why it says in Revelation xxii. 3: "There shall be no more curse: but the Throne of God shall be in it" (*i.e.* in the city which is the Bride); "and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name" (Jehovah Shammah) "shall be in their foreheads." The LORD shall be not only with them, but in them; and He shall be their

God, not merely as One to Whom they look with aspiration and hope; not merely as One on Whom they must depend as their Ruler or Judge; not merely as the Protector of creatures who are separate from Him—but as the Infinite God, Who, while He is still around them, above them, beneath them, and beyond them, with powers and properties far above all conception of the finite, through eternity will be "Jehovah Shammah," the LORD Who is IN that city, which is the Bride of the Lamb, and which for evermore shall be the temple of the living God! Can human language or thought do justice to the high honour which Jehovah has deigned to put upon the worm of the earth? and what think we should be the effect upon our lives even now? If to the indwelling LORD we look for preservation and security in glory, and for the certainty that we shall never thence fall again under the power of Satan; should we not say with holy confidence *now*, "I know Whom I have believed," &c. (2 Tim. i. 12)? If we can say, Thanks be unto God we know that when we are securely placed in the New Jerusalem, and come down with the Lamb as His Bride from heaven, He shall be our Keeper, our Saviour, our Jehovah for ever —ought we not at once to begin the song of the

redeemed, "The LORD is my Shepherd, I shall not want"? If that cry which burst from the converted sceptic Thomas, will be the cry of adoration and delight that goes up from Christ's *glorified* Church, shall it not also be our heart's utterance now? And in response to the revelation of "Jehovah," with all His wondrous Titles and teachings, let us, "with joy unspeakable and full of glory," thankfully say, "MY LORD and MY GOD."

THE END

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